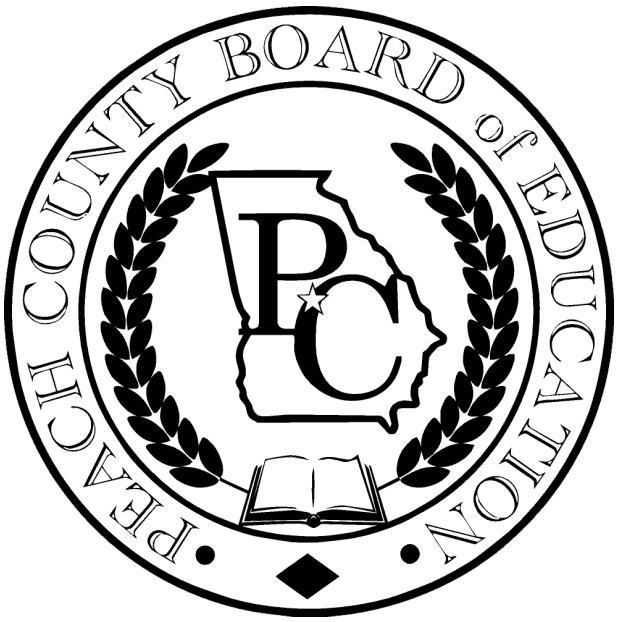

STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK FY 27

PEACH COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

900 Campus Drive Fort Valley, GA 31030
Phone (478) 825-5933 Fax (478) 825-9970
www.peachschools.org

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Mr. Scott Hodges	Chair
Mr. Ben McDaniel	Vice Chair
Mr. Alfred Ellis	Member
Mr. Drenon Everett	Member
Mr. B.J. Walker	Member

CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

(478) 825-5933

Dr. Jesse Davis	Superintendent
Dr. A. Bernard Young	Assistant Superintendent
Rose Powell	Chief Academic Officer
Ashley Hunnicutt	Chief Human Resources Officer
Susan Perry	Chief Financial Officer
Amy Sanders	Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
Jacob Gresham	Executive Director of Technology Services
Floyd Jolley	Director of Elementary Teaching & Learning
Phoebe Layson	Director of School Nutrition
Ben Maddox	Director of Facilities/Operations
Mallerina Marshall	Executive Director of Federal Programs
Tiffany Lopez	Director of Transportation
Shondonette Horton	Director of Student Services
Brent Lemond	Director of CTAE
Greg Ellison	Peach County Schools Athletic Director

SCHOOLS

Byron Elementary School, Grades PK-5
Norika Blanton, Principal
Jessica Cox, Assistant Principal
Rhonda Moulder, Assistant Principal
Dr. Julian Jones, Assistant Principal
880 Kay Road
Byron, GA 31008
Phone: 478-825-8893
Fax: 478-956-0618

Kay Road Elementary, Grades PK-5
Dr. Brandon Hall, Principal
Teletta Marable, Assistant Principal
Justin Schanck, Assistant Principal
202 New Dunbar Road
Byron, GA 31008
Phone: 478-825-9650
Fax: 478-956-5910

Hunt Elementary School, Grades PK-5
Dr. Keysha King, Principal
Heather Carr, Assistant Principal
LaNessia Miller, Assistant Principal
1750 Hwy 341 North
Fort Valley, GA 31030
Phone: 478-825-5296
Fax: 478-825-1123

Fort Valley Middle School, Grades 6-8
Kizzy Johnson, Principal
Kimberly Stephens, Assistant Principal
Anthony Blasingame, Assistant Principal
712 Peggy Drive
Fort Valley, GA 31030
Phone: 478-825-2413
Fax: 478-825-1332

Byron Middle School, Grades 6-8
Vosalowe Cammack, Principal
Dr. Callie Kendrick, Assistant Principal
Justin Ross, Assistant Principal
201 Linda Drive
Byron, GA 31008
Phone: 478-825-9660
Fax: 478-956-3916

Peach County High School, Grades 9-12
Dr. Angela Hambrick, Principal
Daniel Peavy, Assistant Principal
Greg Ellison, Assistant Principal & Athletic Director
Dr. Donna Milling, Assistant Principal
Matthew Park, Assistant Principal
3665 Peach Parkway
Fort Valley, GA 31030
Phone: 478-825-8258
Fax: 478-825-2290

Peach County Achievement Academy

Administration:

Mr. Rodney Hester

Dr. Ronnie Walker

300 Bryant Drive Fort Valley, GA 31030 Phone: 478-825-3441

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REGISTRATION INFORMATION 6
- Age Requirements
- Compulsory Attendance
- Attendance Zones
- Custody
- Guardianship
- Proof of Residence
- Investigation of Proof of Residence
- Emergency Contact Information
- Physical Examination and Immunization
- Grade Placement
- Social Security Numbers
- Transfer Students
- Re-Admission Refusal
- Withdrawal from School

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION 10
- Arrival and Dismissal Time
- Absences, Tardies and Early Check-Outs
- Excused Absences
- Absence Procedures
- Tardies

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES 13
- Student Services/Special Education
- Special Education/Section 504 Services
- Gifted Program
- Medical Needs
- School Nutrition Program

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE 15
- Elementary Grading Scales/Weights
- Middle School Grading Scales/Weights
- High School Courses taken at Middle School
- Elementary & Middle School Promotion/Retention
- High School Grading Scales/Weights
- High School Quality Points
- HOPE / Zell Miller Information
- High School Promotion/Retention
- Grading Calendar
- Exemption policy (high school)
- Graduation

TRANSPORTATION 22
- Video Cameras on Buses
- Transportation to and from Designated Bus Stops
- Safety Tips
- Bus Conduct Rules and Regulations
- Transportation for Extracurricular Activities
- Driving Privileges

TECHNOLOGY 24

GENERAL INFORMATION 25
Accidents
Athletics
Cancellation of School
Classroom Observations
Clubs and Organizations
Extracurricular Activities
Field Trips
Head Lice
Lost and/or Damaged Textbooks and Library Books
Lunch with Students
Parent-Teacher Conferences
Solicitation of Students or Employees
Student Questioning by Officials
Student Questioning by Law Enforcement
Student Searches
Visitors
STUDENT DRESS AND GROOMING 28
CELL PHONES & ELECTRONIC DEVICES 29
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT 29
Student Expectations
Additional Behavior Requirements
Unauthorized Conduct
Bus Conduct Rules and Regulations
Levels of Misconduct
Punishment for Disciplinary Infractions
Expulsion
DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITY 38
Jurisdiction to Take Disciplinary Action
Disciplinary Authority of Teachers & Administrators
Student Discipline Hearings
Peach County Achievement Academy
Reporting Criminal Conduct
Discipline of Students with Disabilities
COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES 42
Student and Parent Grievances
Equal Opportunity Grievances
CERTAIN FEDERAL LAWS AND GUIDELINES 43
Health Education
Gender Equity in Sports
Student Records
Research and Student Surveys
PEACH COUNTY FEDERAL PROGRAMS 46
Peach County Federal Programs Complaint Procedures
-Additional Forms of Note-
COMPLAINT FORM FOR FEDERAL PROGRAMS
ANNUAL PARENT NOTICE (TO REQUEST TEACHER/PARAPRO QUALIFICATIONS)
STUDENT MEDIA RELEASE OPT-OUT FROM
APPENDICES 54

HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

Parents can help make school a successful experience for their students. Consider the following recommendations to help your child have a good school year.

1. Help your child have a stress-free start to each school day. Be sure that your child gets at least eight (8) hours of sleep and provide your child with a good breakfast. Children cannot concentrate if they are tired or hungry.
2. See that your child attends school regularly and arrives on time, and promptly explain any absence or tardiness to school. Make sure your child has adequate transportation to and from extracurricular activities.
3. Provide up-to-date home, work, cellular and emergency telephone numbers to proper school authorities.
4. Listen attentively to your child as he/she talks about school. Praise your child each day for something he/she has done. Have a special place to display work your child brings home from school.
5. Encourage your child to think of school as exciting and important. Attitudes developed during the elementary school years will set the tone for your child's entire school experience.
6. Keep the lines of communication open between you and your child's teacher. Inform the teacher of any family situations that could affect your child's behavior or performance.
7. Maintain regular communication with the school authorities concerning your child's progress and conduct. Inform proper school authorities of any problem or condition, which affects your child or other children in the school.
8. Do not compare your child's progress with that of brothers and sisters or other children. Each child's abilities are unique and each has different strengths and weaknesses.
9. Provide your elementary level child with many books and pictures. Read to your child and have your child read to you.
10. Provide your child with the resources needed to complete class work and other assignments. Discuss report cards and work assignments with your child. Review your child's homework daily.
11. Help your child build confidence in his/her school and teacher. Show an interest in school through visiting and participating in PTA/PTO and club activities.
12. Set an example for your child by showing courtesy and respect for the school and school property, as well as for other parents, students and school personnel.
13. Attend all scheduled parent/teacher conferences.
14. Sign in with the front office upon arrival and departure from school, and be prepared to show identification.
15. Acknowledge receipt of the Code of Conduct by signing and returning the acknowledgment of Code of Conduct form printed in this manual.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Age Requirements

To enroll in Peach County Schools, students entering Pre-K must be 4 years old on or before September 1. Students entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before September 1. First grade students must be 6 years old on or before September 1. Parents must provide a copy of their child's proof of age at the time of enrollment.

Any student who has reached the age of 18 but has not reached the age of 20 by September 1, and who has dropped out of school or withdrawn from school for one semester or more after his/her 18th birthday, must apply for admission by contacting the building principal.

Special Education students are eligible for enrollment in appropriate education programs until the age of 22 or until they receive a high school diploma or special education diploma or the equivalent, whichever comes first.

Compulsory Attendance
Each parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a child between the sixth and sixteenth birthdays of such child shall enroll and send the child to a public school, private school or home study program, and such child shall be responsible for enrolling and attending such school. Any violation or suspected violation of any applicable compulsory attendance law may be reported to legal authorities.

Attendance Zones
Students must attend the school in their assigned attendance zone where their custodial parents/legal guardians reside. Students may not attend schools outside of their assigned attendance zone. If parents move to a new residence within Peach County, the new residence is in a different attendance zone, and the academic year has already started, the parent/guardian must enroll the student in his/her zoned school within 30 days of moving. For additional information please contact the Administrative Services Department. Peach County Schools does not offer School Choice.

Peach County Non-Resident Student Policy (JBCB) outlines an application process for any out-of-county student to apply to attend a Peach County school as a non-resident. The application is to be completed and all required documentation submitted to the Executive Director of Administrative Services at the Peach County Central Office located at 900 Campus Drive, Fort Valley, Georgia. Approved students are required to attend the school closest to their residence. Approved non-resident students may remain enrolled in the Peach County School System only if they continuously meet attendance, behavior, and coursework requirements established by each school. If these requirements are not maintained, the principal may revoke the attendance privilege without convening a hearing. Transportation is not provided for non- resident students.

All full-time employees will be allowed to enroll their own child at their school of employment or their school of choice. Transportation for the child of an employee outside of the child's school attendance area will not be provided. If the employee is a resident of Peach County and ceases to be a full-time employee of a school outside of the employee's school attendance area where his or her child is attending, the child may continue in that school as long as space allows. If the employee is not a resident of Peach County and ceases to be a full-time employee, the parent must complete a non-resident application for the child to continue in Peach County Schools.

Custody
Parents shall provide to the school a certified copy of any court order that applies to custody of the child. Student enrollment forms, as well as other official documents of the school, must be signed by the natural parent or legal guardian with whom the child resides. Educational decisions concerning the child are reserved for the enrolling parent, although both parents may be involved in the process. If there is a disagreement between the two parties, the enrolling parent's decision shall be the governing decision.

It is a crime for any person to make or attempt to make a change of legal custody of a minor child by removing the child from school without permission of the person who enrolled the child in school. This is the case even if the person attempting to remove the child has a court order granting that person custody. Change of custody must be made at an alternate location. However, court orders that specifically authorize or direct the release of custody by the school will be followed. The school will not interject itself in custody or visitation disputes between parents.

The school will give to noncustodial parents, upon request, access to all information required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the laws of Georgia unless there is a valid court order directing the school to not divulge such information. If such an order exists, a certified copy must be presented to the principal.

Guardianship
If a student resides with any person other than a natural parent, a certified copy of the court documents that establish legal guardianship will be required at the time of enrollment. For more information regarding petitions for temporary guardianship, please contact the Probate Court of Peach County.

Proof of Residence
To enroll in Peach County Schools a student must reside in Peach County with a natural parent or legal guardian, apply and be accepted as a non-resident, or the student must be under the care of a state agency. Proof of residence is required when a student initially enrolls in Peach County and whenever a change of residence occurs. Central Registration will accept the following records as proof of residency:

One of the following (must include address)
- Current lease / rental agreement
- Current residential property tax statement
- Current warranty or quick claim deed
- Current home purchase agreement

AND one of the following (must include address)
- Current utility bill
- Car registration / tax
- Governmental agency mail (County, State, or Federal)

Investigation of Proof of Residence
Students enrolled under false information or illegally enrolled will be withdrawn from school. Parents/guardians may be charged tuition for the period of time their child is illegally enrolled. Knowingly and willfully providing false information regarding proof of residence violates state law and may subject one to fine and/or imprisonment.

Emergency Contact Information
It is critical for the school to be able to contact parents at any time students are at school. The school must have the parents' current address and home, cellular and business telephone numbers. Emergency contact persons and their telephone numbers are needed in case a parent cannot be reached. This information is required at the time of registration and whenever a change occurs with the parents' address, telephone or emergency contact information.

Physical Examination and Immunization
Upon initial enrollment in a Georgia public school, parents must provide a certificate of their child's eye, ear and dental examination. This certificate may be obtained from the county health department or from a licensed physician. Documentation of a child's immunization must be provided at the time of enrollment. All new entrants to Peach County Schools (K-12) and all current students rising to the 6th grade must have obtained two doses of the MMR (Mumps) and Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccines. Parents can obtain a Georgia Immunization Certificate from their physician or from the Peach County Health Department. Parents may submit a temporary waiver of Georgia's immunization requirements for religious or medical reasons.

Grade Placement
If acceptable documentation for determining grade placement is not presented at the time the student is enrolled, the student will be temporarily assigned to a grade until determination as to final grade placement can be made. Students whose grade placement is in question between 5th and 6th grade or 8th and 9th grade, will not be temporarily assigned to a school but will be required to take a placement test prior to attending school.

Social Security Numbers
At the time of enrollment in Peach County Schools, parents are asked to provide a copy of the child's social security card or a completed statement of objection (waiver). A statement of objection (waiver) can be obtained at Central Registration.

Transfer Students
Prior to admission, the school must receive a certified copy of the student's academic transcript and disciplinary record from the school previously attended. A student may be provisionally admitted if the name and address of the school last attended and authorization to release all academic and disciplinary records to the school are provided.

The parent must disclose at the time transfer is sought the following information:

1. Whether the student has ever been adjudicated guilty of the commission of a designated felony as defined in O.C.G.A. Section 15-11-63.
2. Whether the student is currently serving a suspension, expulsion or assignment in an alternative program in the district last attended.
3. Whether the student withdrew from the district last attended in lieu of being ordered to serve a period of suspension, expulsion, or assignment in an alternative program.
4. Transcripts from non-accredited schools will be considered on an individual basis. Additional information and testing may be required in order to make a determination of how much credit may be accepted from the student's previous school. School credits or work completed under an individual tutor may not be accepted for credit. Transfer credits will be validated by the student's guidance counselor.

Any student who seeks to transfer to the Peach County School District during the time the student is subject to a disciplinary order from another district for short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion, or who has withdrawn from such other district in lieu of being ordered to serve a period of suspension, expulsion or assignment in an alternative program shall be ineligible to attend school in the Peach County School District. Any student provisionally admitted who is found to be ineligible shall be withdrawn from enrollment.

Re-Admission Refusal
The Peach County Board of Education is authorized to refuse to re-admit or enroll a student suspended or expelled for having been convicted of, or adjudicated to have committed, been indicted for, or had information filed for the commission of a felony or any delinquent act which would be a felony if committed by an adult. The student or his/her parent/guardian may request a hearing pursuant to the Public-School Disciplinary Tribunal Act. A hearing officer, tribunal panel, superintendent or local board shall be authorized to place such a student, who has been denied enrollment in a local alternative program.

Any student who is subject to a disciplinary order in the Peach County School District who withdraws from school and then seeks to re-enter any school in this school district shall remain subject to such disciplinary order for any period of time remaining on such order at the time of the student's withdrawal.

Withdrawal from School
At the time of withdrawal students must return all textbooks, library books, and other school-owned items. Any such items not returned, and any other school-related expenses for which the student is responsible (such as lunch charges), must be paid for at the time of withdrawal. The school may withhold grade reports, diplomas, and/or certificates of progress until restitution is made for lost or damaged textbooks and/or media materials.

In situations where a custodial parent enrolls a child in school, that same parent must be the person who withdraws the child from school.

An unemancipated minor may not drop out of school without the written permission of his/her parent or guardian. Prior to accepting such permission, the school shall schedule a conference with the student and parent/guardian to discuss the educational options available to the student and the consequences of not earning a high school diploma.

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

Arrival and Dismissal Time

Schools may adjust the beginning and ending times to accommodate bus transportation services. The school day begins and ends as follows:

Elementary School (PK-5)
Instructional Day - 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Early arrival – 7:45 a.m.
Middle School (6-8)
Instructional Day - 7:45 a.m. – 2:50 p.m. Early arrival - 7:15 a.m.
High School (9-12)
Instructional Day – 7:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Early arrival - 6:35 a.m.

The Board is not responsible for the supervision and safety of students prior to the beginning of the school day or after the end of the school day. The Board does not expect its staff to exercise charge over students who are left at the school campus before the beginning of the school day or who are not picked up after school in a timely manner. Students are allowed to enter the building at the designated time stated above. In the afternoon, students should leave campus no later than 30 minutes after the last bell unless participating in a school-supervised activity approved by the principal or his/her designee.

Absences, Tardies and Early Check-Outs

1. Absence means the non-attendance by a student in an approved regularly scheduled class or activity, regardless of the reason for such non-attendance. An exception is when a student participates in an approved activity (such as, but not limited to – field trip, academic competition or approved athletic event), he/she may be excused from school, counted present, and shall be responsible for any work missed during the time he/she is away from school.
2. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes each day. On the FIRST DAY that students return to school from an absence, parents should provide the school with a written note explaining the reason for the absence. The note should include the date(s) of the absence, the reason(s) for the absence, and the signature of the parent or of the doctor who treated the student. Written excuses must be provided within three (3) days of returning to school.
3. Students who check in late or check out early must report to the school office and present a written note from their parents explaining their absence. Any individual checking out students in grades PK-8 must present a valid photo ID and that ID information should correspond with information in the district student information system (Infinite Campus).
4. The cut off time for an early check-out for PK-5 is 3:00 p.m.
5. If a PK-8 student is tardy upon arrival at school, a parent must accompany the student to the office and sign for the student. The tardy student may not be permitted to attend class until the parent has signed for the student.

Excused Absences

Students may be temporarily excused from school by the principal in the following circumstances:

1. Serious illness or hospitalization that would endanger the student's health or the health of others, including maternity confinement and delivery;

2. Serious illness or death in the immediate family which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
3. A scheduled medical, dental or eye examination;
4. Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith;
5. Court orders or mandates by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for the armed forces;
6. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety;
7. Other circumstances where the parent or guardian makes prior arrangements with the principal for their child to be absent from school, i.e., college visits, serving as a legislative page, and other special family occasions.

A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U.S. armed forces or National Guard and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave.

Absence Procedures

1. Documentation
    a. Students who desire to document an absence shall present a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian within **three (3) days** of returning to school.
    b. Failure to present an excuse within **three (3) days** shall result in an unexcused absence.
    c. Documentation presented after **three (3) days** will not be considered. Documentation may not be sent by fax, e-mail, or telephone.
    d. A student absent for **five (5) consecutive days** must submit a medical excuse for absences to be excused.

    Any student found to have submitted an excuse falsely presented, as being from a parent or guardian, will be subject to school discipline. Absences covered by such false excuses will be deemed unexcused and no makeup work will be accepted.

    The principal or designee will determine whether or not an absence is excused, and may, at his/her discretion, require supporting documentation from doctor, dentist, clinic, court, funeral home, etc. in order to make this determination. The decision of the principal or designee with respect to the justification and validity of proffered documentation for an absence is final.

2. Making Up Missed Assignments or Tests
    Students shall be given a reasonable opportunity, not exceeding **five (5) school days**, to make up assignments or tests, which were missed because of unexcused absences from school. It is the student and parent's responsibility to arrange to make up work. Failure to make up work after a reasonable time will result in a grade of 0 for assignments missed during an excused absence.
    A. Assignments missed due to absences will be coded as "Missing" and receive a grade of zero until the student submits the assignments and grades are updated to reflect the graded work. Teachers will have a period of 5 additional days after make-up work is submitted to update the gradebook.
3. Absences Due to Pregnancy
    Students who are or become pregnant during any school semester will not be excused from attending school unless the student's treating physician states in writing that the student cannot attend school. Excused absences due to pregnancy or a pregnancy-related condition may be made up under the same terms and requirements as any other excused absence upon the student's return to school.

4. Absences Related to Disciplinary Actions

   Students placed in in-school suspension or participating in school related or sponsored activities are considered to be in attendance at school. Absences resulting from disciplinary suspensions shall be excused for purposes of this policy, subject to the following requirements:

   a. Make up of assignments, quizzes, tests, etc. that are both assigned and due during a period of suspension must be completed and submitted no later than the fifth (5th) school day following the student's return from suspension. Failure to make up work within five (5) school days will result in a grade of 0 for assignments missed.
   b. Work assigned prior to the start of a suspension and due during the suspension shall be accepted and graded if submitted by the suspended student at the completion of the suspension.
   c. Work assigned during a student's suspension with a due date after the suspension shall be accepted for grading on the due date provided the student received the assignment prior to the suspension.
   d. It's the student's responsibility to get all classroom assignments during periods of suspension.
   e. If the student is suspended from school during an exam period, the principal will make arrangements to allow the student to complete their exams.

Peach County Schools shall enforce the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law. It is imperative that all children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school regularly, on time and for the full day, in accordance with (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1). Excessive student absences/tardies interrupt and hinder the learning environment. Students between the ages of 6 and 16 are mandated by the State of Georgia to attend school. Students missing more than 5 unexcused days in Georgia are considered truant by law. Students who accrue 8 or more unexcused absences will be referred to the Peach County Schools Attendance Committee for intervention from local social services, law enforcement and judicial services where appropriate.

According to O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1, any parent, guardian, or other person residing in Georgia having control or charge of a child or children and violate GA Code Section O.C.G.A. §20-2-
690.1 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine of not less than $25 and not greater than $100, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combinations of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction.

All Peach County students are affected by and fall under the provisions of our attendance protocol which is stated as follows:
Level I
Three (3) unexcused absences.
School staff will contact parents and document the contact. Contacts may consist of email, phone call, or teacher notification form.
Level II
Five (5) unexcused absences.
School staff will notify parents of the truancy and request a conference with the parents to sign an attendance contract
Level III
Eight (8) unexcused absences.
Referral to the Peach County School Attendance Task Force where intervention by social services, law enforcement and judicial services will begin.

Absences Counted as Present

Pages for the Georgia General Assembly - Students are recorded as present (not absent) when they serve as pages of the Georgia General Assembly. Documentation is required.

Tardies

Students should make every effort to be in class on time. If students arrive later, they should report to the front office and sign in. They must have appropriate parental note or medical documentation for the tardy to be excused. Unexcused tardies will be cumulative. Individual schools will distribute tardy policies.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Student Services/Special Education

Peach County Schools operates in strict adherence to policies and procedures set forth in IDEA and the State Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Special Education. The state rules, as well as parental rights may be referred to online at the following address: http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/SpecialEducation-Rules.aspx. Special education is "specialized instruction" designed to meet the unique learning strengths and needs of individuals with disabilities from birth through age 21. A child must be evaluated and identified as having a disability to be eligible for special education and/or related services.

What is Child Find?

The purpose of Child Find is to identify, locate, and evaluate children and youth, birth to age 21, who are suspected of, or have a disability or developmental delay. Peach County Schools serves children ages 3 through 21 with identified special education needs.

How can children be referred?

A referral may be made by anyone who has a concern about a child's development. All referrals are considered confidential. The parent retains the right to refuse services. Children may be referred by any of the following:

- Parents/legal guardians/foster parents
- Other family members
- Physicians/health care providers
- Preschool programs
- School district personnel
- Community agencies
- Private school personnel
- Others who are concerned about a child's development

When should a child be referred to Child Find?

A child should be referred when:

- A health or medical disorder interferes with development or learning.
- A child seems to have difficulty seeing or hearing.
- A child appears to have social, emotional or behavioral difficulties that affect his/her ability to learn.
- A child has a diagnosed progressive or degenerative condition that will eventually impair or impede the child's ability to learn.
- A child seems to have difficulty understanding directions like others that are his/her age.
- A child's speech is not understandable to family or friends.
- A child has difficulty with reading, math, or other school subjects.

Where can I find out more about Child Find?

For a preschool aged child, with a chronological age of 3 through 5, who has or may have a developmental disability, please contact Student Services at 478-825-5933 ext. 1005. Parents of students, kindergarten through 12th grade, who suspect their child may have a disability, should contact the teacher, principal, or the chairperson of the school's Student Support Team/MTSS Coordinator.

Student Services/Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your school's counselor or the Student Services Department at 478-825-5933 ext. 1005.

Gifted Program

Peach County uses the multi-criteria approach for gifted identification and placement, which includes mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. In Peach County, students are evaluated for possible automatic referral for gifted education services each year using approved screening instruments. A student may also be referred to the eligibility committee by teachers or any responsible person who has knowledge of a student's intellectual functioning including the student and/or the student/s parent/guardian. For review of the gifted administrative procedures and/or gifted education curriculum, contact the gifted eligibility chair at each school or Mrs. Rose Powell at the Board of Education.

Medical Needs

1. Illness

   If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, the student may contact his/her parents to make arrangements to be checked out of school. The principal should be notified in writing if a student has a chronic illness or disability that could require special or emergency treatment.
   Students should not be returned to school until fever and/or vomiting has ceased for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications. Medicine must be kept in the school office and dispensed by the principal or his/her designee.

2. Medication

   The administering of medication by school system personnel to students shall be permitted only with parental/guardian consent or in the event the school staff reasonably believes the administration of such medication is necessary or desirable for the health or wellbeing of a student. Administration of medication to students shall be done in accordance with the School District's policy on Administration of Medication. Students shall not have possession of prescription or non-prescription medicine while on school property, or while engaging in any school related activity, except that a student may have an asthma inhaler and may have possession of prescription or non-prescription medicine only for the time period reasonably required to deliver it to the principal (or his/her designee) along with a written note from the parent/guardian requesting that such medicine be administered to the student.

   Students are authorized to carry and self-administer prescription auto-injectable epinephrine provided the student's parents provide (1) a written statement from a licensed physician: (a) detailing the name of mediation, method, dosage, and time schedules by which the student is to take the medicine; (b) confirming the student is able to self-administer auto-injectable epinephrine; and (2) a written statement from the student's parent acknowledging: (a) they give

the student permission to self-administer the prescription auto-injectable epinephrine as provided by the student's licensed physician; (b) the parent has provided a medical release that gives school personnel permission to consult with the student's physician regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medicine; and (c) the parent has provided the District with a signed authorization releasing the District, Board of Education, and its employees and agents from civil liability if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction as a result of the student's self-administering auto-injectable epinephrine.

3. Hospital Homebound Service

A student enrolled in the Peach County School District who has a medically diagnosed physical condition, which is non-communicable and restricts the student to his/her home or a hospital for a period of time that will significantly interfere with his/her education may be eligible to be served by the hospital homebound program.

A student may not be eligible for hospital homebound services for a number of reasons, which include, but are not limited to absences due to any of the following:

a. Cases of pregnancy not requiring abnormal restriction of activities as prescribed by a licensed physician. Pregnant students are eligible for hospital homebound if, and only if, a medical doctor determines the condition precludes attendance.
b. Abuse of chemical substances where hospitalization is not required.

Further inquiries about the Hospital Homebound Program should be addressed to the Office of the Superintendent.

School Nutrition Program

The Peach County School Nutrition Program is responsible for the daily preparation and serving of student meals. The goal of the SNP is to provide a healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunch to assist students in meeting academic and physical achievement. Breakfast and lunch are offered to all students at no charge.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Grading Systems

Kindergarten Grading Scale:

Kindergarten will use GKids reports for both progress reports and report cards.

Elementary Grades 1-5

Grade Scale:

Academics – numeric grades 90 – 100 = A
80 – 89 = B
70 – 79 = C
0 – 69 = F
Connections: Art, Music, Gifted Resource and ESOL – letter grades
A – Excellent
B – Above average
C – Satisfactory
F – Failed to meet standards

Elementary Grading weights:
100% - Assessments to include all assignments such as tests, quizzes, daily activities, homework, projects, quick checks etc. entered into Infinite campus to communicate student progress toward mastery of standards.

Middle Grades 6 -8 Grade Scale:
All courses – numeric grades 90 – 100 = A
80 – 89 = B
70 – 79 = C
0 – 69 = F

Middle School grading weights

	6th Grade		7th Grade		8th Grade
Major	35%		30%		30%
Minor	65%		60%		55%
Semester Exam	n/a		10%		15%
Total Percentage	100%		100%		100%

Major Assessments are summative assessments that provide a measure of mastery of standards. They include but are not limited to unit/chapter tests, and performance tasks such essays, research papers and culminating projects

Minor Assessments are formative assessments that provide a measure of progress toward mastery of standards. They include but are not limited to quizzes, daily classwork, homework, progress checks etc.

Semester Exam -cumulative assessment of the content and skills attainment for the semester (**no exemptions for middle schools**).

Grading weights assigned to Major and Minor assessments will be uniform and consistent for all middle school courses in the district.

Grade Calculation:
Elementary and Middle School:
Elementary and Middle school courses are yearlong courses with the exception of specials and connections. Parents will receive progress reports indicating student progress toward grade level/course standards at the end of each 6 weeks with a report card issued at the end of each semester (Fall and Spring).
The Fall and Spring Semester report card grades will be averaged together to obtain a yearly average for each course.

High School Courses Taken at the Middle School
High school courses taken at the middle school will follow all high school grading weights and calculation procedures including End of Course exams if applicable. The course name, grade and credit earned will be placed on the high school transcript and count toward high school graduation but the grade earned in the course will not be calculated into the high school GPA. The omission of these grades in the GPA is consistent with the Georgia Finance Commission's GPA calculations for the HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships.

Elementary & Middle School Promotion/Retention Guidelines:
Must pass with a 70 or above average in 3 of the 4 academic core classes (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies). See district promotion policy for other relevant information that will be reviewed for promotion/retention determination. State assessment policies will be used in applicable grade levels to determine promotion when

appropriate.

High School 9 -12 Grade Scale:
All courses – numeric grades 90 – 100 = A (4 points)
80 – 89 = B (3 points)
70 – 79 = C (2 points)
0 – 69 = F (0 points)

High School grading weights:
45% - Major Assessments are summative assessments that provide a measure of mastery of standards. They include but are not limited to unit/chapter tests, and performance tasks such essays, research papers and culminating projects

35% - Minor Assessments are formative assessments that provide a measure of progress toward mastery of standards. They include but are not limited to quizzes, daily classwork, homework, progress checks etc.

20% - Course Final exam or End of Course Exam (EOC)

Grading weights assigned to Major and Minor assessments will be uniform and consistent for all high school courses in the district.

High school courses are 18 - week semester long blocks.
Parents will receive progress reports indicating student progress toward course standards at the end of each 6 weeks with a report card containing the final course grade. All course grades are included on student transcripts and calculated into the Grade Point Average (GPA).

High School Quality Points
Honors quality points – Three (3) points shall be added to the final average of Advanced Content, Honors, and Gifted courses. The final average after points are added shall not exceed 103.
Advanced Placement quality points – (High School) Five (5) points shall be added to the final average of Advanced Placement courses. The final average after points are added shall not exceed 105.
Courses without weighted grades shall not exceed 100.

HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarship GPA weighted grades:
Scholarship eligibility is determined by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC). Weight added to any grade by the high school for honors, gifted, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or dual enrollment courses is removed by GSFC. The weighting of grades is uniform when calculating the HOPE/Zell Miller GPA. GSFC adds a weight of 0.5 quality points to the student's grade (up to a maximum of 4.0 quality points) for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Dual Enrollment coursework taken from an eligible post-secondary institution. No other courses will be weighted by the GSFC unless authorized by the Georgia General Assembly. For more information about HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarship, please visit: https://www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/hope-zell-miller-scholarships/hope-scholarship/

High School Promotion/Retention Guidelines:
Promotion and retention are based on the attainment of the credits according to the scale below.

10th grade - minimum of 5 credits
11th grade - minimum of 11 credits
12th grade - minimum of 17 credits
Graduation - minimum of 24 credits*

Grade promotion and retention will only take place at the end of each academic year.
*In order to graduate, students must earn the minimum number of credits AND pass all courses required for graduation as determined by the Georgia Department of Education.

Grades K-12- Grade Adjustment
The school teacher of record assigns grades following the procedures set forth in this regulation. Grading may be done in collaboration with co-teachers. No classroom teacher shall be required, coerced, intimidated or disciplined in any manner to change the grade of a student. A violation of this rule regarding assigning grades constitutes an ethics violation.

a. This procedure does not prevent principals or other administrators from discussing grades and grading with the classroom teacher.

b. This procedure does not prevent a school or central office administrator, or the Superintendent, from changing a student's grade. Any grade change made by a person other than the classroom teachers must be approved in writing by the Superintendent, clearly indicated in the student's school records and must indicate the person responsible for making such grade change.

In order to maintain the integrity of student records, no grade may be changed after it is entered on a student's permanent record without following specific procedures established by the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.

Conversion of Letter Grades to Numerical Grades for Transfer and Dual Enrollment Students (Grades 1 - 12)
Letter grades received from other accredited school districts or post-secondary institutions are converted and recorded on the transcript using the scale below. Dual Enrollment course grades will not have quality points added.

A + = 98	B+ = 88	C+ = 78	D = 70
A = 95	B = 85	C = 75	F = 69
A- = 92	B- = 82	C- = 72	
Standards based grading conversions			
4= 95	3 = 85	2 = 75	1 = 69

Course grades transferred from nonaccredited schools will require validation and be converted to a grade of "P" for passing once requirements are met.

In classes with an End of Course (EOC) assessment, EOC's will count 20% of a student's final grade.

Grading Calendar FY27

Term 1 - Fall	Elementary - progress reports every 41/2 weeks	Middle and High - progress reports every 6 weeks
Progress report 1	Progress reports go home - September 8, 2026	Progress reports go home- September 17, 2026
Progress report 2	Progress reports go home - October 8, 2026	Progress reports go home- November 6, 2026
Progress report 3	Progress reports go home - November 18, 2026	N/A
Final Exam window	N/A	Final Exams - December 17th -18, 2026
Report cards	Report cards go home - January 7, 2027	

Term 2 - Spring	Elementary - progress reports every 41/2 weeks	Middle and High School - progress reports every 6 weeks
Progress report 1	Progress reports go home -February 12, 2027	Progress reports go home - February 25, 2027
Progress report 2	Progress reports go home - March 18, 2027	Progress reports go home- April 15, 2027
Progress report 3	Progress reports go home - April 28, 2026	N/A
Final Exam window	N/A	Middle School/High School Underclassmen - May 24th - 26th High School Seniors- May 20th -21st
Report cards	Report cards go home - With students May 26, 2027	Report cards mailed by May 28, 2027

Peach County High School Exam Exemption

A final exam exemption incentive program has been developed to promote good attendance, positive behavior, and exemplary academic achievement in high schools. During semester final exam days, Peach County High School students will be offered the opportunity to exempt their final exams. To be eligible to participate in the Incentive Program, you must meet the following criteria:

- **A student with a grade of 85 or higher in a class at the end of the semester (including quality points for AP and Honors)**
- **Five (5) or fewer absences or tardies in the class (excused or unexcused)**
- **No OSS for the semester**
- **No more than 2 days ISS for the semester.**
- **All debts must be paid in full before the school provided deadline each semester**.

Additional Information:

- The attendance requirement is for each class period, not school day attendance.
- Teachers will run a report for which students qualify for exemption and distribute exemption forms to those students who qualify for an exemption.
- For courses that include an EOC Milestone, the student must take the EOC Milestone which counts as a percentage of the course average. The EOC Milestone may not be exempted because it is a state-mandated assessment.
- If a student exempts an exam, the final grade for the course will be the class average – to include all assignments/assessments – prior to the exam.
- **All appeals are generated through the principal's office and that decision is final**.

Graduation

1. General Requirements
   The Georgia Board of Education and the Peach County Board of Education establish graduation requirements:
   (https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/State-Board-of-Education/SBOE%20Rules/160-4-2-.48.pdf).
   To be eligible for graduation, requirements in each of the following components must be met:
   a. Unit credit: Students must earn the minimum number of units (credits) required for their graduating class and diploma program.
   b. Required courses: Students must satisfactorily complete specific courses required for graduation. Students should also be aware that specific courses may be required for admission to a university, college or technical college. No required course may be substituted, exempted or audited. No courses may be repeated unless the student failed the course.
   c. Attendance: Attendance requirements are those set forth in this handbook and the Georgia compulsory attendance law.
   d. Assessment: Students must satisfy the applicable state assessment requirements.https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/Georgia-Milestones-Assessment-System.aspx Further information may be obtained from your child's school counselor.)
2. Graduation Ceremonies
   All requirements for graduation must be completed before a student can participate in graduation exercises. A diploma will be presented upon completion of all graduation requirements.
3. Additional information pertaining to early graduation will be shared with parents and students by the

Peach County High School Counseling Department and PCHS Administration.

GA Futures:

The GAFutures website (www.gafutures.org) provides tools to assist students with educational and career planning. Students and parents can access a wealth of information to help them make more informed decisions about their academic and career goals.

Georgia HOPE Scholarship Program:

The Georgia HOPE Scholarship offers financial assistance to students attending eligible public and private colleges and universities in Georgia. The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) calculates the HOPE Scholarship GPA.

Eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship is determined by a student's cumulative GPA in all academic core subjects — English, math, science, social studies, and foreign language — regardless of how many credits were earned in each area. Students can view their current HOPE GPA each year through their GAFutures account.

Information about the program is available online at www.gafutures.org. In addition to the GPA requirement, students must complete a specified number of academically rigorous courses — such as Advanced Placement (AP) or Dual Enrollment courses — to demonstrate academic readiness. For students in the graduating class of 2017 and beyond, a minimum of four (4) rigor credits is required. The list of eligible courses that possess academic rigor can be viewed here - https://www.gafutures.org/media/ks5f5zw5/rigor-course-list-09252024.pdf.

Honor Graduates:

Seniors who have a cumulative average of 90 or above at the end of the first semester of their senior year qualify for **Honor Graduate** recognition. To be named an Honor Graduate, a student must maintain a 90 or above average. Additionally, seniors with a GPA of 95 or higher will be recognized as an **Honor Graduate with Distinction**. Final Honor Graduate status will be based on the GPA at the end of the first semester of the senior year. **Please** note that GPAs are not rounded.

Selection of Valedictorian/Salutatorian:

The senior with the highest weighted cumulative numerical GPA at the end of the first semester will be named Valedictorian. The senior with the second-highest GPA will be named Salutatorian.

Because the Valedictorian and Salutatorian represent the highest academic achievements in Peach County, a student must be enrolled in Peach County High School for a minimum of four (4) semesters at the time class rankings are determined.

Dual Enrollment:

Dual Enrollment funding is available to students enrolled at Peach County High School. To receive this funding, students must complete the **Dual Enrollment Funding Application** on the GAfutures website each fiscal year.

Students must adhere to all program guidelines to maintain eligibility for dual enrollment coursework. All grades earned at participating post-secondary institutions will be included on the student's high school transcript and will impact their GPA. Dual enrollment applications for the following school year are due by May 1st.

Early Graduation Requirements for Peach County High School:

It is possible, in certain instances, for high school students to earn sufficient credits to allow them to graduate before the end of the expected four-year (eighth term) time frame. Students who desire to graduate at the end of their eleventh-grade year, or in the middle of their twelfth-grade year, must meet the following requirements:

- Satisfy all the course requirements for a Peach County Schools Diploma as outlined in the year the student entered high school with a grade point average of 3.25 or higher.
- Maintain an overall attendance rate of 90% or better over their high school career.

The student and their parent(s) must sign a letter of intent by the end of the first week of the school year in which they are applying for approval to graduate early. If principal approval is granted and the student opts to graduate early, the following will be forfeited:

- Participation in Senior Week activities
- Funding for college credit earned through dual enrollment

TRANSPORTATION

If you have questions regarding bus transportation, please contact Peach County School District Transportation Department at (478) 825-0601 or visit the Transportation Department page of the Peach County Schools website (www.peachschools.org).

Video Cameras on Buses
Each bus is equipped with a video camera. Students are videoed on each trip. The videos provide a record of a student's behavior on the bus. School personnel review the video to determine actual events.

Transportation to and from Designated Bus Stops
Students will be picked up at their designated bus stop and returned to their designated bus stop. Students may only ride their assigned bus. It is the responsibility of the Peach County School System to transport students from bus stop to school and from school to bus stop. Parents are responsible for the child after he/she is deposited at their designated bus stop. The Peach County School System shall not be responsible for the student after he/she returns to the designated bus stop.

THE PEACH COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL NOT PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS.

Safety Tips

1. Students must be at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the school bus.
2. Students who must cross the road to board a bus should never do so until the bus has arrived, the proper warning signs are displayed, and the driver motions for the student to cross.
3. Students should never cross behind the bus.
4. Students should always stand a safe distance from the road, i.e. at least twelve (12) feet.
5. Students should never run to or from the bus.
6. Students who must cross the road after exiting the bus should always cross at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus after looking in both directions to be sure no traffic is approaching; after the bus has come to a complete stop; and after the driver signals that it is safe for them to cross.
7. Students participating in band shall contact their band director regarding band instruments, which are approved for transportation on a Peach County School Bus.

Bus Conduct Rules and Regulations

See Student Code of Conduct (Bus Conduct Rules and Regulations-page 32) for additional information.

Transportation for Extracurricular Activities

Students are often involved in extracurricular activities that keep them from returning home through the school transportation system. If a parent cannot provide transportation for the student, the parent should ensure that a means of transportation is provided to the student. The school system does not take responsibility to provide transportation for students outside of the normal busing schedules.

Driving Privileges

1. **Driving and Parking Private Vehicles on School Property**
   Students who drive to school must obtain parking permits from the principal's office. Students should take lunches, textbooks, paper, pencils, etc. needed for school when they initially park and leave the vehicle. The principal or the principal's designee must accompany students wishing to return to their car later in the school day. Violation of the rules, regulations and policies of the Board of Education and/or the school concerning driving or parking a vehicle on school campus can result in suspension or expulsion from school, revocation of parking privileges and/or having the vehicle towed at the driver/owner's expense. **While a student vehicle is on school property, the principal** and his/her designee has the right to search the vehicle without obtaining permission from the student or the owner of the vehicle.

2. **Restrictions on Driving Privileges**
   The School District is required to report to the Georgia Department of Education which in turn reports to the Georgia Department of Motor Vehicle Safety Driver's License Bureau, certain violations of the Code of Conduct which may lead to restrictions being placed on the student driving privileges. Violations which must be reported include: dropping out of school, exceeding more than 10 unexcused absences in any semester, suspensions from school for the following: threats or actual violence towards any school district personnel or their property, possession and/or sale of drugs/alcohol; possession and/or use of a weapon; any sexual offenses; and causing bodily harm or disfigurement.

TECHNOLOGY

Network and Internet

The purpose of providing Internet and access to electronic communication tools for students and staff is to promote resource sharing, innovation, communication, and other 21st Century skills. Various accounts may be created for teacher supervised educational purposes.

A content filtering system is utilized to minimize access to inappropriate Internet sites while on the district network, and to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Specific categories and levels of

filtering will be determined by the District Technology Department. No filtering system has proven to be 100% accurate, and inappropriate material may occasionally pass through the filter. Inappropriate sites which are not identified by the filter may be submitted to the district technology department for review and appropriate action.

Any communication over the school district network, whether on a district owned or personal device, should not be considered private and is subject to monitoring. The district reserves the right to access stored data in cases where there is a reasonable suspicion that there has been a violation of this policy.

Acceptable Use
Technology resources are only to be used for purposes which support the educational objectives of the district. The district requires legal, ethical, responsible and appropriate use of those resources. This applies to:

- District owned technology resources at all times and in all locations.
- Privately-owned devices while on district property, at district sponsored events, or while using the district network.
- Students who bring personal devices to school are subject to all technology use guidelines. Devices may be inspected if there is reasonable suspicion of misuse or policy violation.

The following acts are prohibited:

1. Attempts to bypass network, security or content filtering safeguards. This includes using private networks, such as Wi-Fi hotspots, or cellular technologies, such as 3G/4G, for the purpose of circumventing those safeguards.
2. Vandalism, or attempts to damage, interfere or tamper with the proper functioning of district owned technology resources. This includes, but is not limited to, introducing or spreading computer malware.
3. Unauthorized or fraudulent attempts to access information or resources.
4. Sharing personal login credentials for technology resources or accounts.
5. Using technology resources for noneducational purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, playing nonteacher approved computer games, and using network resources to access websites and digital media that do not support class, school or district goals.
6. Transmission of material in violation of United States or state regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene materials, or material protected by trade secrets.
7. Transmission of obscene, bullying, profane, lewd, threatening, disrespectful, or gang related language or images. This applies not only to those who directly engage in this conduct, but also to those who have knowledge of and fail to report such conduct to a school administrator.
8. Transmission of images, audio, or language through any digital media, such as websites, blogs, messaging or emails, is inappropriate by normal classroom standards.
9. Unauthorized distribution of confidential information.
10. The use of technology resources in any location or in any way that violates another person's reasonable expectation of privacy.
11. The use of technology resources for personal gain, promotion of nonprofit or for-profit organizations, commercial activities, product advertisement, religious proselytizing or political lobbying.
12. The use of technology resources in any way that disrupts the normal and safe conduct of school activities.
13. The use of artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI or chatbots, unless explicitly approved by a teacher for educational purposes. Unauthorized use of such tools may be considered academic dishonesty.
14. Posting or sharing content on social media that disrupts the educational environment, threatens school safety, or involves harassment or cyberbullying. Students are expected to demonstrate responsible digital citizenship both in and out of school.
15. Failing to bring school-assigned devices to class fully charged. Students are expected to arrive prepared for instruction each day. Those who repeatedly fail to bring a charged device may be given alternative paper assignments and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Security
Any issues with the physical security of technology resources, such as vandalism, theft or compromised passwords, should be immediately reported to the Director of Technology.

Consequences
Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. This may include, but is not limited to, loss of technology privileges, detention, suspension, or legal action, depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

Financial
In the event that district owned equipment is used by a student, the student and parent/legal guardian agrees to properly use and care for the equipment, and will assume the risk of loss by theft, destruction, or damage. If the equipment is damaged or returned with any accessories missing or damaged, as determined by the manufacturer or a district technology staff member, the district will charge the student/parent/legal guardian the repair/replacement cost. If the equipment is lost or stolen, the student/parent/legal guardian will be financially responsible for the cost of replacement. In the event that damage occurs, it must be reported immediately to a school administrator. All equipment must be returned when requested.
The district reserves the right to seek monetary reimbursement for any and all damages incurred as the result of vandalism.

Disclaimer
Peach County School district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it provides. The district is not responsible for any damages, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-delivered, misdelivered, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence, errors or omissions. The district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Accidents
Peach County School District – Disclaimer for Accident Liability
In accordance with Georgia law, the School District shall not be responsible for loss or injury sustained as a result of any accident which occurs on any of its properties. The School district will not be responsible for the replacement of any items that are damaged or destroyed as a result of any accident which occurs on any of its properties. The School District will not be responsible for any medical expenses for injuries that occur as a result of any accident on any of its properties.
If a student is injured or becomes ill at school, every effort will be made to contact the parent and act at the parent's direction. If a parent cannot be contacted, school officials will take reasonable actions to preserve the health of the child. Parents must notify the school if their child has health problems that could result in a health emergency and should explain the procedures the school should follow.

Athletics
Students enrolled in grades 6-12 and meeting academic requirements will be eligible to participate in interscholastic events. For more information, contact the principal or school district Athletic Director, Greg Ellison. Students will not be retained for athletic purposes.

Book-Bags, Sports Bags and Other Bags
Book-bags may be used by students. Bags should not be of design or size as to cause disruption on the school bus. Bags with rollers are permitted providing they meet the previously mentioned safety requirements. If a student chooses to use a rolling bag, they must carry the bag when entering and exiting the bus. A luggage- type bag that is too bulky for students to safely hold in their lap is prohibited on the bus. For safety reasons, the center aisle of the bus must remain clear of any and all bags.

Cancellation of School
In the event of severe weather or other emergencies, official information about school closings will be broadcast on area radio, television stations and official social media outlets. Parents should be aware that severe weather or other emergencies could cause school to be canceled during the school day. Parents should plan accordingly.

Classroom Observations
Parents/Guardians who wish to observe student classes must request an appointment at least 24 hours in advance. Principals reserve the right to designate an alternate time/date for an observation dependent upon scheduled building-level activities. See Board Policy KM – Visitors to School.

Clubs and Organizations
As required by Georgia law, schools must provide to parents a list of all clubs and organizations available for students. Schools will send this information to parents at the beginning of the school year. Included with this list shall be a form that parents should use to notify the school if they wish to prohibit their child from participation in any club or organization. Please contact your child's school if you have not received this list and notification form. If new clubs or organizations are formed during the school year, parents will be notified.

Extracurricular Activities
The principal, superintendent and Board of Education must approve all extracurricular activities and field trips. Students who violate school rules or the rules of the Board of Education while on extracurricular activities or trips shall be subject to disciplinary action in the same manner as if the violations were committed on school property and during school hours. All school-sponsored activities shall be conducted under the direct supervision of the sponsoring teacher(s).

If transportation to and from an activity is provided by Peach County Schools, both the eligible students and supervising teachers will ride in the vehicles provided so that supervision may be maintained. Contingent upon the principal's approval, an exception may be made when the parent wishes to assume direct responsibility for his or her child's transportation.

Field Trips
Parents will receive notices of field trips well in advance of the scheduled trip and will be asked to sign a field trip permission form. Sometimes a small contribution may be requested of the parents to help defray transportation or facility costs. No student will be penalized in any manner or denied the opportunity to attend the field trip for failure to contribute.

Head Lice
Because head lice are so easily spread from one student to another, students with head lice (or eggs) cannot remain at school. If a student has head lice, his/her parents will be asked to pick up the child. Students will not be allowed to return to school until proof of effective treatment is provided and an examination indicates the student no longer has head lice. In the event that head lice are a recurring problem, clearance from the Peach County Health Department or a physician may be necessary before the student may return to school.

Lost and/or Damaged Textbooks and Library Books
Parents are responsible for the cost of lost and/or damaged textbooks and library books. Textbooks are kept for seven years. The cost for textbooks, which are lost and/or damaged within the first year of purchase, will be full replacement value. The replacement costs will decrease by ten percent (10%) for every year thereafter.

Lunch with Students
Parents/guardians are welcome to eat lunch with their children at school. On such occasions, parents are encouraged to purchase a school lunch but are permitted to bring food to the school for consumption by themselves and their children. Parents are asked to please inform the school administration office by 9:00 A.M. on the morning that they intend to have lunch with their children. Location, time and all other aspects of parents' attending lunch at school will be at the discretion of the school's administration.

Commercial foods (*outside restaurants*) **may not be delivered** to the school at any time (examples include parents, friends, Door Dash, Waitr, Uber Eats, etc.).

Metal Detectors
The Board of Education has authorized the use of hand-held and walk-through metal detectors. School officials or law enforcement officers will conduct metal detector checks on groups or individuals in a minimally intrusive, nondiscriminatory manner.

A student's failure to permit a metal detector search as provided in the Student Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension. Any student wearing a pacemaker, defibrillator, or similar device who objects to being scanned by a metal detector must notify the appropriate school official and may be subjected to an alternate means of search. Any student allegedly wearing a pacemaker, defibrillator, or similar device must provide the school with medical documentation to support this claim within five (5) school days or be subject to disciplinary action.

Parent-Teacher Conferences
Parents are encouraged to contact the school to arrange a parent-teacher conference when the parent would like more information about their child's performance at school. A parent-teacher conference can be an effective way to help students improve their schoolwork. To schedule a conference, parents should contact the school office or the teacher. Teachers are not available for parent-teacher conferences during instructional time.

Solicitation of Students or Employees
Solicitation of students or employees by any business, industry, organization or individual for the purpose of selling a product, service or membership is prohibited on school grounds. The selling of any article or subscription, or any other activity undertaken for the purpose of raising funds or collecting monies in or through a school is prohibited unless the particular activity is approved by the Peach County Board of Education. **Please do not allow your child to bring items to school to be sold to students or employees.**

Student Questioning by Officials
Principals and Assistant Principals have the responsibility and authority to question students for the purpose of maintaining a safe and orderly school environment without parental consent. DFCS officials investigating suspected child abuse are permitted to conduct reasonable interviews and inspections of children. Any request by a Guardian Ad Litem appointed by the court to interview a student or to inspect the student's school record should be submitted in writing along with court documentation establishing the Guardian Ad Litem's relationship with the child.

Student Questioning by Law Enforcement
School Resource Officers ("SRO"), as well as Probation Officers of the Juvenile Court, are permitted to question students at school without prior parent approval. The SRO as well as the Probation Officers of the Juvenile Court must notify the principal or his/her designee prior to questioning students. Law enforcement officers from other agencies investigating non-school related matters may question students with the consent of the parent/guardian. Law enforcement officers who have a detention or warrant for arrest, or state that the situation involves pursuit of a suspect linked to a felony crime may question students without parental consent.

Student Searches

In order to maintain order and discipline in schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and staff, school authorities have the right to conduct searches of students and their property. This includes not only student desks, lockers, and vehicles located on school property, but also any belongings in a student's possession, such as backpacks, purses, and other personal items. These searches may take place at any time, either as part of routine safety procedures or when there is reasonable cause to believe a student may be in possession of an illegal, prohibited, or dangerous item.

When a search is initiated, students are typically given the opportunity to voluntarily produce the item in question. They may also be asked to empty their pockets, pocketbooks, or book bags. In certain cases, students may be required to remove outer garments, such as jackets, vests, shoes, or socks, to assist in the search.

If school officials believe a search should go beyond these standard measures, a School Resource Officer may be called to assist. Refusal to comply with a lawful search by an administrator may result in disciplinary action, which could include suspension.

Should the search uncover any illegal or contraband materials, those items will be turned over to the appropriate legal authorities for proper handling. Items that are not illegal but are in violation of school policy will be retained by the school until claimed by the student's parent or guardian.

Visitors

All schools in the Peach County School District are closed campuses. All visitors must report to the main office. Visitors must wear a name badge while at the school. Unauthorized person(s) found on school property will be prosecuted (O.C.G.A. § 16-7-21).

Peach County Schools Dress Code

Good grooming and personal appearance are essential elements to learning and the learning environment. Students' dress and personal appearance are expected to not interfere with the health and safety of anyone in the school and should not be disruptive or interfere with the legitimate interest and welfare of the students. School administrators or designated person(s) at each school have the authority to determine inappropriate dress. Any student violating the dress code must modify the infraction per the administrator's request. While at school, students must be dressed clean and neatly and should adhere to the following dress expectations/or Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards:

1. Shoes or sandals must be worn. Closed-toe shoes must be worn in laboratory and shop-type course areas consistent with Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards. **Bedroom shoes are NOT permitted.**
2. Clothing with pictures, writings, messages, and/or symbols related to or promoting or considered to promote racism, sex, obscenities, alcohol, tobacco, violence and/or drugs are considered disruptive to the educational process and are prohibited.
3. Hats, hoods, scarves, bandanas, curlers, or other headgear are not to be worn at school.
4. Holes in pants must be below fingertip length. Students wearing pants, slacks, skirts, or shorts at an unacceptable level shall move the clothing to a more acceptable level and secure it with their own personal belt or with means supplied by the administration of the school. **An appropriate length for shorts and skirts is 2 inches above the knee for grade levels 4 through 12.** Pants, slacks, skirts, or shorts worn by a student at an unacceptable level after having been instructed to do otherwise will be considered an act of insubordination. Pants must be worn on the hips or waist area; sagging pants are prohibited

5. Shirts must have a sleeve (no muscle shirts) and mid-section must be covered at all times (seated/standing). Females should not wear tops that show cleavage, bare tank tops alone, or spaghetti strap type tops without an over shirt/jacket. No bright-colored undergarments under light-colored shirts, shorts or pants.
6. Biker pants, sagging pants, uncovered spandex, strapless attire, tank tops, half shirts, bare midriff tops, halters, see-through clothing, exposed underwear, unbuttoned shirts revealing bare chests, hanging chains (including those attached to clothing), or coats/jackets that go below the waist (including dusters/trench or other similar styles) are not to be worn.
7. Tights, leggings, jeggings, joggers, or yoga pants may not be worn without the principal's approval.
8. Pajamas may not be worn to school.
9. Blankets are not permitted and if brought on campus blankets must be placed in a book bag until the end of the day.
10. Facial piercings that are deemed safety hazards and can be unduly disruptive to the learning environment should not be worn.
11. Athletic wear is allowed at the discretion of the school principal.

*****Any deviations from the dress code and final determination of questionable dress is at the discretion of the school administration.***

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

The Peach County School District believes that use of non-school issued electronic devices presents unnecessary distractions during the school day. Students are not permitted to use their cell phones or any other non-school issued electronic device during the school day. The office phone is available for use with the permission of office personnel. Students will not be permitted to leave class to use the phone.

Only the PCBE Internet network provided by the district should be used to access the internet while on campus. Personal internet connective devices such as but not limited to cell phones / cell network adapters should not be used to access outside internet sources at any time. Personal tablets and/or devices are not permitted on campus because all students will be assigned district issued electronic devices.

Peach County School District will not be responsible for lost or stolen personal communication or personal electronic devices.

Students may not use tape recorders, video cameras, cell phones, or other electronic devices to record classroom instruction/activities. Exceptions to this rule may be granted, for valid reason(s), at the discretion of the teacher with written approval by the building principal. Care must be taken to protect the privacy rights of students.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Student Expectations - Each student is expected to:

1. Behave in a responsible manner at school, on school buses, at school bus stops, and at all school- related functions on or off campus.
2. Demonstrate courtesy and respect for others.
3. Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
4. Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials to class and complete assignments.
5. Obey all District rules and cooperate with the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
6. Communicate with your parents/guardian about your school progress.

Additional Behavior Requirements

The District may impose campus, classroom, or club/organization rules in addition to those found in the Student Handbook. These rules may be listed in the student and campus handbooks, be posted or distributed in classrooms, or be published in extracurricular handbooks, state or national organization bylaws, and/or constitutions. Sponsors and coaches of extracurricular activities may require and enforce additional standards of conduct for student participation in extracurricular activities.

Organizational standards of behavior concerning an extracurricular activity are independent of the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of these standards of behavior that are also violations of the Student Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student, including but not limited to the student being removed from participation in extracurricular activities, exclusion from school honors, suspension and expulsion for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Unauthorized Conduct

1. Academic Dishonesty

   Coursework submitted by a student must be the student's own, original work. Students shall not cheat on any assignment by giving or receiving unauthorized assistance, or commit the act of plagiarism. Students who commit such acts are subject to receiving a grade of zero on the assignment in question as well as disciplinary action.

2. Alcohol and Drugs

   A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any alcohol or mind-altering substance, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, cocaine, marijuana, controlled substance, counterfeit drug, alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, or intoxicant of any kind. A student shall not possess, sell or use any drug or alcohol paraphernalia or related object of any nature. Use of prescribed medications dispensed by a registered pharmacist is allowed, so long as said medications are used in accordance with school rules governing the possession and use of prescribed medications. All prescription drugs shall be kept in the original container and shall not be distributed to other students.

   Students who see or become aware of any alcohol and/or other drugs or drug related objects must not touch the material **nor remain in the presence of the person or group possessing it. Students must notify a staff member immediately, or be subject to discipline, including but not limited to expulsion.**

3. Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation, and Cyberbullying

   Peach County Schools prohibits bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyberbullying in accordance with Georgia law and Board Policy JCDAG. Students are expected to treat others with dignity and respect and refrain from any conduct that creates an intimidating, threatening, or hostile educational environment.

   Reports of bullying will be investigated promptly and appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and supportive interventions will be implemented when warranted. Retaliation against any individual who reports bullying or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

   For the District's complete Bullying Prevention, Reporting, Investigation, and Response Procedures, including definitions, reporting options, investigative processes, student supports, and disciplinary responses, please refer to Appendix A of this Code of Conduct.

.

4. Computer Use Violations

   Students will be held **accountable** for violations of any computer use policy, including but not limited to the Student Internet Safety Policy. A student and his/her parent/guardian will also be responsible for all damages and costs incurred for service or repair or any computer or computer equipment damaged by a student.

5. Gang-Related Activity

   Exhibiting gang affiliation and/or engaging in any gang-related activity is not permitted. For the purposes of this handbook, a gang is defined as any group or association of three (3) or more persons, whether formal or informal, as evidenced by a common name or common identifying sign, symbol, tattoo, graffiti, attire, or other distinguishing characteristic, that encourages, solicits, promotes, condones, causes, assists, or abets any illegal or disruptive activity.

   Students shall not use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang-related activity, including but not limited to:

   a. Soliciting others for membership in a gang;
   b. Requesting any person to pay protection, bullying, or otherwise intimidating or threatening or physically harming any person;
   c. Inciting other students to engage in any gang related activity;
   d. Defacing any school property with any kind of gang graffiti.

6. Obscene, Slanderous and Vulgar Speech

   Students may not engage in speech or expression which:

   a. Is obscene to minors, libelous, slanderous, indecent, lewd, or vulgar;
   b. Advertises any product or service not permitted to be possessed or used by minors by law, including but not limited to alcohol, tobacco and controlled substances;
   c. Injures, harasses or invades the privacy of other people including, but not limited to, speech or expression which defames any person on the basis of his/her race, color, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or creed; or
   d. Will result in or which school administrators reasonably forecast will result in a material or substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or school activities, which may include but is not limited to representations of killing or sacrificing animals or humans, pentagrams, upside-down crosses, the number 666, or swastikas.

   School administrators may also prohibit any other type of speech, expression or dress, which is inconsistent with school district policy.

7. Sexual Harassment

   It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to harass any other student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to the following:

   a. Verbal harassment or abuse;
   b. Pressure for sexual activity;
   c. Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications;
   d. Unwelcome touching;
   e. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats;
   f. Sexually-orientated kidding, teasing, or jokes;
   g. Graphic or degrading comments about an individual or their appearance;
   h. The display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
   i. Physical contact or blocking movement.

   Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or consensual personal and social relationships between students. <u>It also does not apply to age appropriate behavior between very young students.</u> Rather, it is behavior which is ***not welcome*** and which is ***personally intimidating, hostile or offensive.***

Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other conduct of a sexual nature by employees or volunteers toward students are ***unwelcome*** by definition, and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Any student who alleges sexual harassment by a student, teacher, administrator, or other school system employee may complain directly to a principal, guidance counselor or other individual designated to receive such complaints. All allegations of sexual harassment shall be fully investigated and immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be taken as appropriate.

8. Tobacco

   Students shall not possess, transmit or use tobacco or tobacco-related products in any form, including, without limitation, lighters, rolling papers, and matches.

9. Vapor Products

   Students shall not possess, transmit, or use vapor or vapor related products in any form, including e-cigarettes, vapor pipes and e-juice.

10. Weapons and Dangerous Instruments
    a. Students are not allowed to carry, possess, or have under his/her control any weapon, explosive compound, firearm, cap pistol, water gun, rubber knife, or any other toy or object that resembles a weapon while at a school building or on school property, at a school function on or off-campus, or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. A student in possession of any such item will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Handbook, with the matter being reported to law enforcement authorities.
       1) Weapon: Includes any pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, taser or stun gun, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or a dirk, any knife regardless of the length of the blade, straight edge razor or razor blade(s), spring stick, metal or wooden knucks, blackjack or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as nun chahka, nunchuck, nunchaku, shuriken or fighting chain, or any disc of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or bat, club, or other bludgeon type weapon, chains, pipes, sticks or any weapon of any kind or any object that is used as a weapon.
       2) Explosive: Includes any bomb, firebomb, Molotov cocktail, firecracker, fireworks, stink bomb, bullet, shell, gunpowder, grenade, missile, or any other type of explosive device or substance.
       3) Firearm: Includes but is not limited to any weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device; or any type of weapon which will expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant and which has any barrel with a bore of more than **one-half (1/2) inch** in diameter. A destructive device includes any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or any similar device.
    b. Any student in possession of or having under his/her control a firearm while at school or a school function on or off campus, on school property, or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school system, may be immediately suspended from school. The matter will be submitted to a disciplinary hearing officer and reported to law enforcement authorities. Unless otherwise prohibited by law, students found to have committed this offense by the disciplinary hearing officer will be expelled from Peach County Schools for

not less than **one (1) calendar year**. Upon appeal, the Peach County Board of Education may modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

c. Toys such as cap pistols, water guns, and rubber knives are prohibited. Bringing toys that resemble weapons onto any school property or bus can result in suspension or expulsion from school.

11. Students shall not engage in any other activity, which is prohibited by this Student Handbook, by any other policy of the School District, the School, or by law.

Bus Conduct Rules and Regulations

1. For the safety of all students and school personnel, students are expected to obey the following rules:
    a. The school bus is an extension of the classroom.
    b. Bus drivers are responsible for the student's conduct, safety and transportation and therefore shall have complete control of students. Bus drivers will report promptly to Transportation Services any bus misbehavior. Transportation Services will notify the school principal of any bus disciplinary issues. Principals or their designee(s), NOT BUS DRIVERS, are responsible for disciplining students for bus misbehavior.
    c. Bus drivers, with the assistance of the principal or his/her designee, may assign seats to all students.
    d. Students must take their seats promptly when loading the bus and remain in their seats while the bus is in motion.
    e. Students will not be allowed to enter or leave a bus at any place other than at the student's usual bus stop or school unless authorized by the principal or his/her designee. Students will be picked up at their designated bus stop and returned to their designated bus stop or school. Students who must change buses at any school or wait for the school bus must remain at the designated location at the school until the bus arrives and departs. Parents remain responsible for the child after he/she is dropped off by a parent or guardian at designated bus stop until such time as the student enters his/her designated bus. The Peach County School District shall not be responsible for any student after he/she is returned by the Peach County School District to the student's designated bus stop.
    f. Bus drivers will not put students off the bus after accepting students, but will carry students to the school or to their designated bus stop.
    g. Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices, lights or reflective devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to computer; cell phone; pager; any tape, compact disc, audible radio or mp3 player, mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other electronic devices, lights, or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.
    h. Misconduct on a school bus will result in the application of the normal discipline procedures of the School District. The following is a nonexclusive list of infractions, which may result in the principal suspending students from the school bus, or school, or both:
        1) Being insubordinate to the bus driver including, but not limited to, giving the bus driver an incorrect name or address;
        2) Failing to obey orders or directions of the bus driver;
        3) Using vulgar or obscene language whether written or spoken;
        4) Using obscene gestures or improper language;
        5) Smoking, possessing or using tobacco or any smoking paraphernalia;
        6) Getting on or off the bus at any improper location;
        7) Damaging the bus, leaving trash on the bus or throwing objects on the bus or out the windows;
        8) Making threats; bullying; engaging in acts of physical or verbal violence; being disrespectful towards the bus driver or any other persons on the school bus; or other unruly behavior;
        9) Possession of contraband items, including but not limited to weapons, drugs or

alcohol, or prohibited electronic devices;
10) Tampering with emergency exits including but not limited to the back door;
11) Drinking any liquid, or eating, or chewing any food, gum or candy;
12) Talking or causing disruption at railroad crossings or bus stops.
13) In cases of extreme student misbehavior while being transported to and from school or school related activities, appropriate law enforcement officials may be called to remove the student(s) from the bus. The student may also be subject to suspension from the school bus for the remainder of the school year.
14) No luggage carriers or luggage carts are allowed on the bus.
15) Silence shall be observed at all railroad crossings and bus stops.

2. Procedure for Addressing Bus Misconduct

The bus driver will speak with the student about the misconduct and reassign the student to another seat as needed. The driver will document the offense and any discipline. The driver will give a written copy of the discipline notice to the Director of the Transportation, or their designee, who will provide all necessary documentation to the school principal.

The principal shall take appropriate disciplinary action for any bus misconduct, which may include, but is not limited to, the loss of the privilege of transportation. The principal may also call a disciplinary hearing for bus misconduct and will notify the parent/guardian of any warnings, disciplinary actions, or bus suspension.

No student shall be allowed to ride any Peach County School Bus if the student's riding privileges have been suspended. If the school year ends and the student has not served his/her entire bus suspension, then the student shall finish the bus suspension at the beginning of the next school year.

Levels of Misconduct

Students may not engage in any other activity, which is prohibited by or may be punished pursuant to this Student Handbook, which is prohibited by any policy or rule of the School District or which is prohibited by law.

The Student Code of Conduct is organized into four (4) categories of prohibited behaviors: Level-1 Offenses, Level-2 Offenses, Level-3 Offenses, and Lever-4 Offenses. Additional information regarding prohibited behaviors and disciplinary actions follows these sections.

Parents and students should carefully review **ALL** information contained in the Student Code of Conduct. Students are subject to disciplinary action for engaging in or attempting to commit any of the prohibited behaviors listed in the Student Code of Conduct.

Level-1 Offenses

1. Behavior detrimental to learning, including but not limited to unexcused tardies to school or class, and disruptions of the learning environment.
2. Being insubordinate to school personnel.
3. Being disrespectful to students, school personnel, or other persons.
4. Being in an unauthorized area.
5. Eating or drinking in an undesignated area.
6. Violating the policies for bus conduct (See Bus Conduct Rules and Regulations).
7. Possessing and/or using nuisance items, including but not limited to noise makers, novelty items, and any other item that disrupts class.
8. Deliberately giving false or misleading information, including but not limited to forgery and altering records.
9. Failure to be prepared for class.
10. Failure to deliver and/or return written communication between home and school.
11. Displaying or using a cell phone, pager, or electronic communication device during the school day without the consent of the principal or his/her designee.

12. Gambling.
13. Lunchroom or restroom misconduct.
14. Leaving school or skipping class without permission.
15. Inappropriate physical contact between students.
16. Violating the student medication policy (See Student Medication Policy).
17. Violating the student dress code (See Student Dress and Grooming Code).
18. Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any material, substance, food item, or personal belonging that is inappropriate for school without the consent of the principal or his/her designee.

Level-2 Offenses

1. Accumulation of seven (7) or more Level-1 violations.
2. Communicating a terroristic threat: which occurs when one threatens, whether spoken, written, or transmitted by an electronic device, to commit an act of violence.
3. Verbally or physically harassing or taunting any other student, including but not limited to harassing or taunting on the Internet (web-based sites) or via any other electronic device such as a cell phone.
4. Theft, including but not limited to attempted theft, extortion, bribery, theft by deception, and/or possession of stolen property.
5. Fighting.
6. Using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging tobacco, or possessing any tobacco paraphernalia.
7. Vaping – Using and/or possessing any device and/or related paraphernalia designed to convert liquids or solids into vapor for the purpose of inhalation. Other charges related to the substance(s) in the device may be administered.
8. Engaging in disorderly conduct.
9. Refusing to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences.
10. Failure to report to a teacher or administrator the knowledge of an event, device, object, or substance that could cause harm to self or others;
11. Posting or distributing unauthorized materials on the school grounds.
12. Sexual misconduct, including but not limited to harassment; possessing, accessing to viewing obscene or vulgar materials; indecent exposure; entry into areas designated for the opposite sex only; and/or sexual contact.
13. Engaging in hazing, which includes but is not limited to, any activity which endangers the physical health of a student, regardless of a student's willingness to participate in such activity.
14. Engaging in gang-related activity, which includes, but is not limited to, any activity that encourages, solicits, promotes, condones, causes, assists or abets any illegal or disruptive act.
15. Damaging or vandalizing school or personal property.
16. Engaging in a third (3rd) act of bullying within a school year.
17. Violating the Student Internet Safety Policy.
18. Violating any law that constitutes a misdemeanor under Georgia law.
19. Any other act that endangers the welfare or safety of other students or staff.
20. Any other act that seriously disrupts the orderly process of the school.
21. Verbal Altercation

Level-3 Offenses

1. Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, being under the influence of any drug or substance declared unlawful, any substance or chemical that is mood altering when taken, or any substance represented to be a drug or unlawful substance; admits to the use of any substances represented to be a drug prior to attending school or a school related activity; or possessing any drug paraphernalia.
2. Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, being under the influence of

any alcoholic beverage; or admits to the use of alcohol prior to attending school or school related activity.
3. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator or other school employee toward a student.
4. Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering or exchanging any counterfeit money.
5. Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering or exchanging any weapon, explosive, compound or object that can reasonably be considered and/or used as a weapon.
6. Violations constitute a felony under Georgia law.
7. Threat to staff member

Level-4 Offenses
Students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to commit physical acts of violence against and inappropriate physical contact with school personnel (teachers, administrators, other employees or school visitors), which includes but is not limited to:

1. Unintentional but inappropriate physical contact with school personnel.
2. Attempting to make inappropriate physical contact with school personnel.
3. Intentional physical contact with school personnel of an insulting or provoking nature.
4. Intentional physical contact with school personnel that causes harm, unless such contact occurs in self-defense.

Punishment for Disciplinary Infractions
In addition to and not in limitation of the disciplinary authority given to teachers, administrators and student discipline hearing officers in this Student Handbook or by School District policy, the following punishments may be given to any student who violates this Student Handbook or School District policy.

1. Punishment for Level-1 Offenses.
   At an administrator's discretion, any student who commits or attempts to commit a Level-1 violation or any other violation of the Student Handbook that is not specifically designated as a Level 2, 3 or 4 offense may be assigned in-school suspension for up to ten (10) days or assigned out-of-school suspension for up to ten (10) school days, regardless of the number of previous violations. A disciplinary hearing may also be called at the discretion of the administrator.

Other available punishments for Level-1 violations include but are not limited to:

1st Violation: In-School Suspension for two (2) school days. **2nd Violation**: In-School Suspension for three (3) school days. **3rd Violation:** In-School Suspension for five (5) school days.
4th Violation: Out-of-School Suspension for two (2) school days. **5th Violation:** Out-of-School Suspension for three (3) school days. **6th Violation:** Out-of-School Suspension for five (5) school days.
7th Violation: The student may be suspended (in-school or out-of-school suspension) with the matter being submitted to the student discipline hearing officer. If the hearing officer finds the student has engaged in or attempted to commit the seventh violation of any Level-1 Offense, the hearing officer will issue in-school suspension, a short-term suspension, a long- term suspension, or expulsion from school. The hearing officer has the discretion to assign the student to serve the suspension/expulsion at the Peach County Achievement Academy (PCAA).

2. Punishment for Level-2 Offenses
   Engaging in or attempting to commit any Level-2 Offense may result in the student being assigned in school suspension or out-of-school suspension for up to ten (10) days and the matter may be submitted to a student discipline hearing officer.

   If the student discipline hearing officer finds that a student has engaged in or attempted to commit a Level-2 Offense, the hearing officer will issue an in-school suspension, a short-term suspension, long term

suspension, or expulsion from school. The student discipline hearing officer has the discretion to allow the student to apply to enroll at the Peach County Achievement Academy (PCAA).

A student allowed to attend PCAA shall not go on any other school grounds during the time of the suspension or expulsion unless the student is granted an early release in accordance with this Student Handbook.

3. Punishment for Level-3 Offenses
   Engaging in or attempting to commit any Level-3 Offense will result in the student being assigned an out-of-school suspension, for up to ten (10) school days with the matter being submitted to a student discipline hearing officer.

   If the student discipline hearing officer finds that a student has engaged in or attempted to commit a Level-3 Offense, he/she will be given a short-term suspension, long term suspension or expulsion. The student discipline hearing officer has the discretion to assign the student to PCAA.
   A student assigned to PCAA shall not go on any other school grounds during the time of the suspension or expulsion, in accordance with this Student Handbook.

4. Punishment for Level-4 Offenses
   A student who is alleged to have committed a Level-4 Offense will be assigned out-of-school suspension for up to ten (10) school days and the matter will be submitted to a student discipline hearing officer. A student who is found to have committed a Level-4 (a) (b) or (c) act will be given a short-term suspension, long term suspension or expulsion, and a student found to have committed a Level 4 (d) act will be expelled from Peach County Schools for the remainder of that student's eligibility to attend public schools and will be referred to the Juvenile Court.

5. **A student who has been assigned an out of school suspension or has been expelled may not return to his or her home school during the period of the suspension or expulsion.**

6. **The Peach County Board of Education has the authority to increase, reduce, modify or enforce any punishment given pursuant to this Student Handbook.**

7. **The principal of the school possesses final decision making authority for school-level disciplinary decisions.**

An Additional Note Regarding Students in Pre-K Through Third Grade

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-742: Students in Pre-K through 3rd grade will not be expelled or suspended from school for more than five consecutive or cumulative days during a school year without first receiving a multi-tiered system of supports, such as response to intervention. Multi-tiered system of supports' or 'MTSS' also may include a systemic, continuous-improvement framework in which data based problem-solving and decision making is practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting students at multiple levels of intervention.

If such a student is receiving or has received a multi-tiered system of supports, the school has met these requirements. This requirement does not apply if:

- the student possessed a weapon/ dangerous instrument or illegal drugs;
- and/or the student's behavior endangers the physical safety of other students or school personnel.

In addition, if student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan, prior to assigning any student in Pre-K through 3rd grade out-of-school suspension for more than five consecutive or cumulative days during a school year, the school or program shall also convene an IEP or Section 504 meeting to review appropriate supports being provided as part of such IEP or Section 504 plan**.**

Definition of Disciplinary Terms

1. In-School Suspension
    a. This program is designed to isolate students who violate certain school rules from their regularly assigned classrooms and school activities, while allowing students the opportunity to progress with classroom assignments. In school suspension may include suspension from all extracurricular activities, athletic participation and other school events. If a student violates any rule of the in-school suspension program, that student may be suspended from the program and from school for the remaining number of days that the student was assigned to in-school suspension.
2. Short-Term Suspension
    a. Short-term suspension is out-of-school suspension for a time period of not more than ten (10) days. Short-term suspension may include suspension from all regular school activities, extracurricular activities, athletic participation, and other school events.
3. Long-Term Suspension
    a. Long-term suspension is an out-of-school suspension that exceeds ten (10) days but is not longer than a semester. Long-term suspension may include suspension from all regular school activities, extracurricular activities, athletic participation, and other school events.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an out-of-school suspension that is for one (1) semester or longer, and includes but is not limited to permanent expulsion from all Peach County Schools. Expulsion may include suspension or permanent expulsion from all regular school activities, extracurricular activities, athletic participation, and other school events.

DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITY

Jurisdiction to Take Disciplinary Action

School administrators are authorized to take disciplinary action for misconduct that occurs:

1. On school grounds;
2. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event;
3. Off the school grounds at a non-school activity, function or event, but where the misconduct leads to a disruption of school; and
4. In route to and from school, on the bus, and at the bus stops.

Authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus non-school related actions by students, at any time of the year, which have a direct or immediate impact on school discipline, the educational operation or function of the school, or the welfare of students or staff. Such an act could include, but is not limited to, a felony, a delinquent act, which would be considered to be a felony if committed by an adult, an assault upon another student, a violation of the laws prohibiting controlled substances, or sexual misconduct. A student whose presence on school property may endanger the welfare or safety of other students or staff, or whose presence may cause substantial disruption at school, may also be subject to discipline.

Disciplinary Authority of Teachers & Administrators

1. Teachers
    a. Teachers shall maintain discipline and order in the classroom, and are authorized to assign students

to detention, refer students to the office, and employ any other discipline and behavior management techniques except for discipline which is forbidden by law or which is permitted under the Student Handbook or by Peach County policy to be administered only by an Administrator or student discipline hearing officer.

b. For any day assigned to detention, students will be required to spend a period of time, not to exceed one (1) supervised hour, completing assigned school work. No other activity will be allowed during detention. Transportation of students assigned to detention is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. One (1) day advance notice shall be given to allow students to make alternate transportation arrangements for those days when assigned to detention.

2. School Administrators
   a. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, school administrators (principals and assistant principals) have the authority to administer any discipline or behavior management technique which a teacher is permitted to use, may assign students to in-school suspension, assign students short-term suspensions, may assign students out-of-school suspension up until the time of a disciplinary hearing (even if for a longer period of time than a short-term suspension) and refer any disciplinary matter to a student discipline hearing officer for a disciplinary hearing. Any student who has been suspended pending a disciplinary hearing shall be allowed to make up school work that is missed due to the suspension pending the disciplinary hearing, and shall be permitted onto school grounds to pick up class assignments at the office unless an administrator determines that allowing the student to pick up work assignments at the office constitute a danger to other students or staff. Although generally progressive in nature, discipline should be appropriate for the misbehavior and the age of the student. Consequently, administrators have the latitude of assigning discipline in relation to the misbehavior. For example, students who engage in more serious acts of misbehavior, such as fighting, are not entitled to a warning before any other disciplinary action is taken.

   b. The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in the Student Handbook, the principal or their designee may undertake corrective measures which he/she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided such action does not violate School Board policies or procedures, or state or federal laws.

Student Discipline Hearings

1. Referral to Discipline Hearing Officer
   All disciplinary matters where a long-term suspension or expulsion could occur shall be referred to a student discipline hearing officer for a disciplinary hearing. Student discipline hearing officers are appointed by the Board of Education to hear disciplinary matters. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, disciplinary hearing officers have the authority to issue a short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion of any student found to have violated any provision of this Student Handbook. The hearing officer has the discretion to assign the student to attend the Peach County Achievement Academy except for violation of Level 4 - #4, page 34.

2. Disciplinary Hearing Procedure
   a. Notice to Students and Parents
      If any disciplinary matter is referred to a student discipline hearing officer for a disciplinary hearing, the student and parents of the student shall be given notice of the hearing prior to the time of the hearing, which shall include the following:

      1) The rule(s), which the student has allegedly violated.
      2) A description of the student's acts.
      3) The names of the witnesses who may testify against the student (witnesses may be added prior to and during the hearing.).

4) The time and place for the hearing.
5) That the student is entitled to subpoena witnesses to be present at the hearing
6) And the student will have the right to present evidence, examine any and all witnesses presented and have an attorney, at the student's expense, to represent the student.

b. Time and Conduct of the Hearing

1) Time of Hearing: The disciplinary hearing shall be conducted no later than ten (10) school days after the time when the student has been suspended for the alleged offenses, unless the parent and school mutually agree to an extension or the conduct of the student or parent causes a delay beyond said ten (10) day period.
2) Nature of Hearing: A student disciplinary hearing is formal, although the strict rules of evidence as applied in a court do not apply in a disciplinary hearing. The student discipline hearing officer will determine the innocence or guilt of a student accused of violating the Student Code of Conduct. Although the school has the burden of establishing guilt, the student should be prepared to present evidence and witnesses to support their innocence.
3) Record of the Hearing: The student discipline hearing officer shall make a verbatim or written record of any information orally presented at the hearing. All statements and documentary evidence shall be kept on file by the Superintendent or designee of a period of sixty (60) days after the date of the disciplinary hearing if no appeal is filed and/or thirty (30) days after the completion of an appeal at which time all items will be destroyed. A transcript of the hearing shall not be prepared unless there is an appeal to the Board of Education.
4) Examination of Witnesses: All parties shall be afforded an opportunity to present and respond to evidence and to examine and cross-examine witnesses about any matters logically relevant to the charge against the student. The student discipline hearing officer may limit unproductively long or irrelevant questioning.
5) Role of the Parents, Attorney and Victim(s): The parents or legal guardian of the student and any victims may be present at the hearing and make a statement to the student discipline hearing officer concerning their feelings about the proper disposition of the case and to answer any questions. The student may be represented by counsel, at student's expense, at the hearing.
6) Subpoenas: All parties shall be entitled to subpoena witnesses for the hearing. A student or parent/guardian shall submit all requests for subpoenas to the student's principal at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the time of the disciplinary hearing.
7) Group Hearings: When students are charged with violating the same rule, and the facts are substantially the same for all students, group hearings may be scheduled if the group hearing will not likely result in confusion or prejudice. If, during the hearing, the hearing officer finds that a student's interest will be substantially prejudiced by a group hearing, the hearing officer may order a separate hearing for that student.
8) Meetings and Records: All student discipline proceedings and hearings conducted by either the student discipline hearing officer or the Board of Education are confidential and are not subject to the open meetings law. Any written records, transcripts, exhibits or other documents assembled or used in any manner with regard to the conduct of any student discipline hearing are not public records and are not subject to public inspection.

c. Decision of the Student Discipline Hearing Officer

The student discipline hearing officer shall prepare written findings of fact, make a determination regarding innocence or guilt, and if applicable, punish the student for violations of the Student Code of Conduct. The decision of the student discipline hearing officer will be made within ten (10) days after the conclusion of the hearing or the close of the record, whichever is later. A copy of the decision shall be given to all parties as soon as practicable.

3. Appeals

a. Appeals to the Peach County Board of Education

Any decision by the student discipline hearing officer may be appealed to the Board of Education by filing a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within twenty (20) days from the date

the student discipline hearing officer's decision is rendered. The written notice shall specifically set forth the reasons for the appeal, and shall designate in what respects the student discipline hearing officer erred in the findings or recommended punishment. No specific form of appeal is required.

The Board of Education shall consider any appeal within ten (10) school days from the date the superintendent received the notice of appeal.

The appeal shall be considered by the Board of Education solely on the record made before the student discipline hearing officer, and no new testimony or evidence shall be received or reviewed by the Board of Education. The Board of Education may take any action it deems appropriate, and any decision of the Board shall be final.

Any disciplinary action imposed by the student discipline hearing officer may be suspended by the superintendent pending the outcome of the appeal to the Board of Education

b. Appeals to the State Board of Education
A student or parent aggrieved by a disciplinary decision of the Board of Education may appeal the Peach County Board of Education's decision to the State Board of Education by giving the superintendent written notice of appeal within thirty (30) days of the decision of the Peach County Board of Education.

Peach County Achievement Academy

The Peach County Achievement Academy (PCAA) is designed to provide intense interventions for students who are behaviorally or academically unsuccessful. Instruction at PCAA will be primarily delivered through an online, computer-based learning model.

Discipline

1. Long-Term Placement

In appropriate cases, the student discipline hearing officer may assign a student to Peach County Achievement Academy (PCAA).

A student sixteen (16) years of age or older who has been suspended or expelled and has been assigned to PCAA and who has not enrolled within five (5) days of the decision of the student discipline hearing officer will be withdrawn from school. Students under 16 years of age who have been suspended or expelled and assigned to PCAA by the student discipline hearing officer and who have not enrolled within five (5) days will be withdrawn from school and referred to a counselor or truant officer for counseling and appropriate intervention which may include a charge of truancy being filed against the parent and/or student.

2. Early Release from the PCAA
Students admitted to the PCAA *may not* be eligible for early release unless explicitly specified in the Findings, Rulings, and Notices of the Disciplinary Hearing Officer.
3. Expulsion from the PCAA
If a student commits any acts of misconduct or violates any of the rules and regulations of PCAA while serving a suspension or expulsion, the PCAA Director may discipline the student as set forth in the Student Handbook and may also recommend that the student's privilege of attending the PCAA be revoked for the remainder of the period of suspension or expulsion. In that event, the PCAA Director shall contact the Assistant Superintendent to schedule a follow-up disciplinary hearing to determine future placement.
4. Transitional Placement
Peach County School District appoints a District Case Management Consultation Team, under the direction of the Department of Administrative Affairs, to review all records of students enrolling in Peach County Schools from the physical or legal custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice. Based on the records review, the team determines appropriate placement of the student.

Attendance at Peach County Achievement Academy
Students will be withdrawn after ten consecutive unexcused absences or twelve total unexcused absences within a semester. Regular school attendance is imperative for a student to succeed in school. Therefore, PCAA staff will attempt to make parent contact for any student with excessive student absences.. A written excuse should be signed and sent by the parent within three days of the student's return to school in order for an absence to be coded as an excused absence Notes from a physician may be required for purposes of excusing absences when deemed necessary.

Reporting Criminal Conduct
Any action or failure to act by a student which is a violation of any law or which an administrator or teacher believes may be a violation of a law may be reported to the Student Resource Officer or any other legal authority.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities
All Peach County students covered by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act shall comply with and be subject to this Student Handbook unless otherwise prohibited by law. Students attending the Elam Alexander Academy who are covered by the Individual with Disabilities Education Act shall comply with and be subject to the Bibb County Student Handbook and this Student Handbook unless otherwise prohibited by law. In the event of any conflict between the Bibb County Student Handbook and the Peach County Handbook, the Bibb County Handbook shall govern with respect to all actions and activities, which occurred in Bibb County or relate to Elam Alexander Academy.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Student and Parent Grievances
The Peach County Board of Education recognizes that a student and their parent should have some means to effectively express concerns, which will be considered by the school administration. Any student or parent/guardian who wishes to resolve a complaint should first attempt to speak with the teacher/school administrator who made the decision which the student or parent/guardian considered unjust or unfair.

If the matter remains unresolved, the student or the student's parent/guardian shall alert the principal in writing within fifteen (15) workdays of the discussion with the teacher/administrator referenced above. Alternatively, the student or parent/guardian may make an appointment with the principal or the principal's designee to give a sworn statement summarizing the complaint. The party shall state the nature of the complaint and indicate how the party may be reached in order to schedule a conference. The principal shall render a decision to all parties within fifteen (15) workdays.

If the student or parent/guardian remains dissatisfied with the principal's decision, the party may appeal the decision within ten (10) workdays to the Superintendent and shall follow the District's existing policy for appealing grievances, a copy of which is available upon request. Requests for an appeal or for copies of grievance appeal policies may be submitted to:

Peach County School District Attention: Superintendent 900 Campus Drive
Fort Valley, Georgia 31030
(478) 825-5933

Equal Opportunity Grievances
Employees, students or other persons who believe that they have been discriminated against because of their sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, or disability, or have been subjected to sexual harassment should contact:

Chief of Human Resources Peach County School District 900 Campus Drive
Fort Valley, Georgia 31030
(478) 825-5933

OR

The Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
61 Forsyth Street, S.W., Suite 19T70 Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 562-6350

Complaints should be made in writing stating the nature of the complaint and indicating how the party may be reached in order to schedule a conference. Complaints submitted to the School District administrator designated above shall be resolved in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Complaint Procedures, a copy of which is available upon request.

CERTAIN FEDERAL LAWS AND GUIDELINES

Peach County School District is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Hatch Amendment, the Vocational Education Guidelines, and the Gender Equity in Sports Act. Please review the following selection of federal laws and regulations pertinent to your child.

Health Education

Classes in health education may not be offered separately on the basis of sex except that separate sessions for boys and girls are permissible during times when materials and discussion deal exclusively with human sexuality.

Gender Equity in Sports

As required under (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-315), students are hereby notified that the Sports Equity Coordinator for the Peach County School District, Dr. Michelle Masters. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity or alleged gender discrimination in sports may be submitted to the Sports Equity Coordinator.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records as follows:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. The parent or guardian should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record in question, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
    a. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task, (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

b. FERPA also permits disclosure of personally identifiable information without consent to appropriate officials in health or safety emergencies so long as the disclosure of the information is necessary for the receiving party to respond to the emergency nature of the situation and made to protect the health or safety of the student or others.
c. FERPA permits disclosure in response to a lawfully issued judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
d. Finally, the School District may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4 The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave, SW. Washington, DC 20202-4605

The school district has designated the following types of personally identifiable information about students as "Directory Information":

Student's name, address and telephone listing; Date and place of birth;
Dates of attendance;
Participation in officially recognized activities and sports; Weight and height of members of athletic teams; Photographs;
Video and audio images and recordings; Diplomas, honor and awards received; Major field of study;
The name of the most recent previous educational agency, institution, or school attended by the student.

Directory information may be released by the school district without the consent of a parent or student. A parent or eligible student who desires that the school district not release any or all of the directory information about a student must notify the school district to that effect in writing addressed to **Peach County School District, Attention: Superintendent, 900 Campus Drive, Fort Valley, Georgia 31030 by no later than September 20, 2023.**

Research and Student Surveys

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding the school's conduct of surveys, collections and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. These include the right to:

1. Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:
   a. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
   b. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
   c. Sex behavior or attitudes;
   d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
   e. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
   f. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student nor parents; or
   g. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:
   a. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
   b. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and

safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law;

c. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

3. Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:
   A. Protected information surveys of students;
   B. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
   C. Instructional material used as a part of the educational curriculum.

The School District has adopted policies that protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collections, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The School District will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and will be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. The following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

a. Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
b. Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education.
c. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Students or parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Students and parents are hereby notified that the Title VI, VII, IX, ADA and Section 504 contacts for the Peach County School District may be reached at:

The Office of the Superintendent Peach County School District 900 Campus Drive
Fort Valley, GA 31030, (478) 825-5933

Notice of Non-discrimination

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices, student programs and dealings with the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations.

Any employee, student, applicant for employment, parent or other person who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy must make a complaint in accordance with the procedures outlined in Board Policy GAAA found in the Electronic Board Policy Manual which may be accessed through the Peach County Schools web site at www.peachschools.org. The Peach County Schools Board Policy Manual may also be accessed through the Georgia School Boards Association web site at www.gsba.com

Federal Programs

Program	Contact	Contact Email
Title I, Part A Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title I, Part A Academic Achievement Awards	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title I, Part A, 1003a **School Improvement**	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title I, Part A Foster Care Provisions	Ms. Stephanie Buford Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	sbuford@peachschools.org mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title I, Part A Family School Partnership Program	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title I, Part C Education of Migratory Children	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title I, Part D Neglected or Delinquent Children	Ms. Stephanie Buford Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	sbuford@peachschools.org mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title II, Part A Supporting Effective Instruction Grant	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title III, Part A Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE)	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title V, Part B Rural Education Initiative	Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	mmarshall@peachschools.org
Title IX, Part A McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act	Ms. Stephanie Buford Mrs. Mallerina Marshall	sbuford@peachschools.org mmarshall@peachschools.org
IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Mrs. Shondonette Horton	shondonette.horton@peachschools.org
Section 504	Mrs. Shondonette Horton	shondonette.horton@peachschools.org

Dr. Jesse Davis, Superintendent
Mrs. Mallerina Marshall, Executive Director of Federal Programs

900 Campus Drive
Fort Valley, Georgia 31030
Phone (478) 825-5933
Fax (478) 825-9970

Complaint Procedures under the ESEA Act

Section 9304 – General Applicability of State Educational Agency Assurances
Section 9503 – Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency ("complainant") may file a complaint with the Peach County Board of Education ("Department") if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a local educational agency ("LEA"), the state educational agency ("SEA"), or an agency or consortium of agencies is violating the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) against a Georgia school district, 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program, or the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) itself. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

- Title I, Part A – Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
- Title I, Part A – School Improvement Grants, referred to as 1003(a) and 1003(g)
- Title I, Part C – Education of Migratory Children
- Title I, Part D – Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
- Title II, Part A – Supporting Effective Instruction
- Title III, Part A – Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
- Title IV, Part A – Student Support and Academic Enrichment
- Title IV, Part B – 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Emergency Relief Funds CARES Act, CRRSA Act, ARP Act
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- Equitable services

C. Equitable services

Formal complaint procedures regarding a school district's or a 21st CCLC program's equitable services for children attending private school are found on the State Ombudsman Webpage (https://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/State-Ombudsman.aspx).

D. Filing a complaint

A complaint must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include:

- The complainant's contact information (name, address, phone number, and email address);
- The date(s) on which the alleged violation(s) occurred and the date(s) on which any school district, 21st CCLC program or GaDOE action or decision regarding the alleged violation was issued, if applicable;
- The facts and documentation on which the complaint is based;
- The specific federal requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the federal statute or regulation, if known);
- Documentation or an explanation of efforts to resolve the complaint;
- Contact information for other individuals who can provide additional information, if applicable (name, telephone number, address, and email address);
- Whether a complaint has been filed with any other agency and, if so, which agency; and
- A proposed resolution to the complaint.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Peach County Schools
Director of Federal Programs
900 Campus Drive
Fort Valley, Georgia 31030

Once the complaint is received by the Director of Federal Programs, it will be copied and forwarded to the district Superintendent's office as documentation of complaint being received and investigated.

E. Complaint Investigation overview

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the Director of Federal Programs or his or her designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

1. The date the district received the complaint;
2. How the complainant may provide additional information;
3. A statement of the ways in which the LEA may investigate or address the complaint; and
4. Any other pertinent information.
5. If the complaint involves other entities, the LEA will also send a copy of the Letter of Acknowledgement to the other entity, along with a copy of the complaint. The LEA will contact the other entity to clarify the issues and review the complaint process. If the complaint cannot be resolved through this contact, the LEA will invite the entity to submit a written response to the LEA, and to provide a copy of the response to the complainant.

The Department will have thirty (30) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

Appropriate Department staff will review the information and determine whether:

1. Additional information is needed;
2. An on-site investigation must be conducted;
3. Other measures must be taken to resolve the issues raised in the complaint; or
4. A Letter of Findings can be issued.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the LEA will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. Either the 30-day or the 60-day timelines outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist.

The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant, as well as the other parties involved.

F. Right of Appeal

If an individual, organization or agency is aggrieved by the final decision of Peach County Schools, that individual, organization or agency has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. For complaints filed pursuant to Section 9503 (20 U.S.C. §7883, complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal the Department's decision to the United States Secretary of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Department's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

Dr. Jesse Davis, Superintendent
Mrs. Mallerina Marshall, Executive Director of Federal Programs

900 Campus Drive
Fort Valley, Georgia 31030
Phone (478) 825-5933
Fax (478) 825-9970

Peach County Schools
Complaint Form for Federal Programs under the ESEA Act

Please Print

Name (Complainant):		
Mailing Address:		
Email Address:		
Phone Number (Home):	***Phone Number (Mobile):***	***Phone Number (Work):***
Agency/Agencies complaint is being filed against:		
Date on which violation occurred:		
Statement that the Georgia Department of Education, local school system, other agency or consortium of agencies has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program (include citation to the federal statue or regulation) (attach additional sheets if necessary):		
The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (attach additional sheets if necessary):		
Documentation or an explanation of efforts to resolve complaint:		

List the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information:
Has a complaint been filed with any other agency? If so, provide the name of the agency.
Please attach/enclose copies of all applicable documents supporting your positions.
A proposed resolution to the complaint:

Signature of Complainant:_____ **Date:**_____

Mail this completed form to:

Peach County Board of Education
ATTN: Executive Director of Federal Programs
900 Campus Drive
Fort Valley, Georgia 31030

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

August 4, 2026

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, the Peach County School District would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher—
  - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
  - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
  - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.

- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/ or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the principal at your child's school for more information. We will respond in a timely manner. Thank you for your interest and involvement in your child's education.

Byron Elementary School	Norika Blanton	478-825-9650	nblanton@peachschools.org
Byron Middle School	Vosalowe Cammack	478-825-9660	vcammack@peachschools.org
Fort Valley Middle School	Kizzy Johnson	478-825-2413	kizzy.johnson@peachschools.org
Hunt Elementary School	Keysha King	478-825-5296	keysha.king@peachschools.org
Kay Road Elementary School	Brandon Hall	478-825-8893	bhall@peachschools.org
Peach County Achievement Academy	Rodney Hester	478-825-3441	rhester@peachschools.org
Peach County High School	Angela Hambrick	478-825-8258	angela.hambrick@peachschools.org

STUDENT MEDIA RELEASE OPT-OUT FORM STUDENT INFORMATION

Legal Last Name	Legal First Name	Legal Middle Name	Current School

NOTE: If this form is not completed, it will be considered that you are allowing your student to participate in publicly-related activities and news media opportunities as described below.

Completion of this form advises the Peach County School District of your choice to NOT have your child's name, image, voice or likeness appear in any form of media communication (Internet, photography, publishing, recording or videotaping) generated by the Peach County School District or news-gathering organizations (news media).

Additionally, you are expressing that you do not wish for your child to participate in any Peach County School District approved media or publicity interviews or discussions that may be used for promotional or news-gathering purposes unless you direct otherwise.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD'S NAME, IMAGE, VOICE OR LIKENESS USED, PLEASE SIGN BELOW.

I do not allow district staff and/or news-gathering organizations to interview, record, photograph, videotape or use my child's likeness and name in publicity or news-gathering purposes.

_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date

Each school is to keep a copy of this form in the Front Office or Media Center and staff should make the Peach County School District's Central Office and/or news-gathering organizations aware of any students with signed opt-out form

APPENDIX A

Bullying Prevention, Reporting, Investigation, and Response Procedures

Peach County School System

Purpose

The Peach County School System is committed to providing every student with a safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment. This appendix outlines the district's procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating, and responding to bullying in accordance with the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4), State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.35, and Peach County Board of Education Policy JCDAG.

These procedures are intended to promote consistency across all schools while ensuring timely intervention, appropriate support for students, restorative practices when appropriate, and accountability for bullying behaviors.

Effective: July 1, 2026

Adopted By: Peach County Board of Education

Related Policies: JCDAG – Bullying, JCDA – Student Code of Conduct, JG – Student Welfare

PEACH COUNTY SCHOOLS

BULLYING

REPORTING & INVESTIGATION PROCESS

Peach County Schools is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all students.

1 REPORTING

Report suspected bullying to a teacher, counselor, or school administrator.

Reports can be made by students, parents, staff, or community members.

2 PROMPT INVESTIGATION

School administration will investigate all reports to determine if they meet the legal criteria for bullying under Georgia law and district policy.

3 PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Parents/guardians of both the alleged bully (aggressor) and the targeted student will be notified that an investigation is taking place.

4 INVESTIGATION COMPLETED

Administration reviews all information and evidence to reach a determination.

IF IT IS FOUND TO BE BULLYING

FINDINGS & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Administration determines findings and applies appropriate consequences based on the severity and frequency of the behavior and in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and district policy.

SUPPORT & SAFETY

Support and safety plans will be implemented as needed for the targeted student.

The school will monitor the situation to help ensure a safe environment.

IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCE (GRADES 6–12)

A third bullying offense within the same school year results in mandatory assignment to an alternative school as required by Georgia law.

IF IT IS FOUND NOT TO BE BULLYING

NOT A FINDING OF BULLYING

If the investigation determines that the behavior does not meet the definition of bullying, it will be documented and closed according to district procedures.

APPROPRIATE ACTION

Other school-appropriate actions or interventions may be taken to address the situation, support the students involved, and promote a positive school climate.

MONITOR & FOLLOW UP

The situation may be monitored as needed, and students are encouraged to report any future concerns.

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.

If you see or experience bullying, report it.
You have the power to help keep our schools safe for everyone!

Peach County Schools Bullying Procedure

Bullying is Prohibited

The school district is committed to providing a safe, positive, and respectful learning environment for all students. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyberbullying are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

This policy applies to:

- On-campus behavior
- School buses and bus stops
- School-sponsored activities and events
- Electronic communication that substantially disrupts the school environment
- School technology and devices

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is intentional behavior that is meant to hurt, threaten, intimidate, embarrass, humiliate, or harm another student. Bullying can happen in person, online, on school property, on the school bus, at school activities, or through electronic communication.

Bullying often involves repeated behavior or a situation where one student has more social, physical, or emotional power than another student.

Bullying may include:

- Physical actions such as hitting, pushing, tripping, or damaging property
- Verbal actions such as threats, insults, teasing, or name-calling
- Social or relational bullying such as exclusion, rumor spreading, or public embarrassment
- Cyberbullying through social media, text messages, gaming platforms, or other electronic communication

Normal peer conflict or disagreements that do not involve intimidation, threats, harassment, or repeated harmful behavior may not be considered bullying.

Examples of situations that may not be considered bullying by themselves include:

- Mutual arguments or disagreements between students
- One-time conflicts or isolated incidents
- Students voluntarily going back and forth in text messages, social media messages, or online conversations
- Students agreeing to meet up or continue communication after a disagreement
- Continuing to voluntarily interact with or communicate with someone accused of bullying
- Friendship conflicts, drama, or changing friend groups
- Accidental comments or misunderstandings without intent to harm
- Competitive behavior during sports or games that does not involve intimidation or harassment

However, these situations may still violate school rules if they involve threats, harassment, inappropriate language, fighting, or behavior that disrupts the school environment. School administrators will review the full situation, including intent, repetition, impact, and evidence, when determining whether behavior meets the definition of bullying.

Definition of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that happens through phones, computers, tablets, gaming systems, social media, text messages, apps, websites, email, or other electronic communication.

Cyberbullying includes using technology to intentionally threaten, harass, embarrass, intimidate, humiliate, spread rumors about, or harm another student.

Examples of cyberbullying may include:

- Sending threatening or cruel messages
- Posting embarrassing photos or videos without permission
- Creating fake accounts to target someone
- Spreading rumors online
- Repeatedly harassing someone through texts, chats, or social media
- Encouraging others to exclude, threaten, or ridicule a student online

Not all online conflicts are considered cyberbullying.

Examples that may not automatically be considered cyberbullying include:

- Mutual disagreements or arguments between students online
- Students voluntarily continuing conversations or group chats after disagreements
- One-time rude comments that are not part of repeated harassment
- Blocking or unfollowing someone on social media
- Ending friendships or leaving group chats without threats or harassment

However, online behavior may still violate school rules if it involves threats, harassment, intimidation, inappropriate content, or causes a substantial disruption to the school environment.

Schools may investigate cyberbullying that occurs off campus if it impacts student safety, learning, or school operations.

Reporting Bullying

Students, parents, staff members, and community members are encouraged to report bullying immediately.

Reports may be made:

- Verbally
- In writing
- Electronically
- Anonymously

Retaliation against anyone reporting bullying or participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

Investigation Procedures

When a report of bullying is received, school administrators shall:

1. Assess the immediate safety of the students involved.
2. Notify the parents/guardians of both the alleged aggressor and the alleged target that an investigation has begun.
3. Conduct a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation.
4. Interview the students involved and any witnesses.
5. Review physical, electronic, and digital evidence, when applicable.
6. Determine whether the behavior meets the district's definition of bullying under Georgia law.
7. Document all findings and interventions.
8. Notify parents of the investigation outcome, consistent with student privacy laws.
9. Implement appropriate disciplinary and restorative responses.

10. Monitor the situation to prevent retaliation or recurrence.

Corrective and Restorative Responses

When bullying is substantiated, administrators shall implement age-appropriate interventions designed to:

- Protect the targeted student.
- Stop the bullying behavior.
- Address the needs of the student who engaged in bullying.
- Restore relationships when appropriate.
- Prevent future incidents.

Possible responses may include:

- Parent conferences
- Restorative conferences
- Counseling
- Behavior contracts
- Loss of privileges
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Alternative School Placement
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement when required

Student Support

The school may provide support services for students impacted by bullying, including:

- Counseling
- Safety planning
- Schedule or seating adjustments
- Check-ins with counselors or administrators
- Peer mediation when appropriate

Georgia Law

In accordance with Georgia law, students in grades 6–12 who commit bullying for the third time in a school year may be assigned to an alternative school.

Student Code-of-Conduct

Bullying and Harassment

Students are expected to treat others with respect and dignity at all times.

The following behaviors are prohibited:

- Physical intimidation or aggression
- Threats or harassment

- Name-calling or verbal abuse
- Spreading rumors
- Cyberbullying through phones, computers, gaming systems, or social media
- Encouraging or participating in bullying behavior
- Retaliation against a student who reports bullying

Student Expectations

Students should:

- Report bullying to a trusted adult
- Speak respectfully to others
- Help create a safe school environment
- Refuse to participate in bullying behavior
- Support peers who may be targeted

Corrective and Restorative Responses

When bullying is substantiated, administrators shall implement age-appropriate interventions designed to:

- Protect the targeted student.
- Stop the bullying behavior.
- Address the needs of the student who engaged in bullying.
- Restore relationships when appropriate.
- Prevent future incidents.

Possible responses may include:

- Parent conferences
- Restorative conferences
- Counseling
- Behavior contracts
- Loss of privileges
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Alternative School Placement
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement when required